The Nation.

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PERIODICALS DEPARTMENT

LENIN'S LEGACY

Now that the Communist Party's Central Committee has repudiated Article 6 of the Soviet Constitution guaranteeing the party a monopoly on power, Soviet conservatives seem to be in retreat, and the "vanguard party" struggles to catch up with the society it purports to lead. Mikhail Gorbachev has moved up the date of the next party congress and of the real election of officials within the party, and the unwieldy coalition that has so far forced the Soviet reformers to moderate their programs may be replaced with a narrower, firmer base for more far-reaching change.

Like his preceptor Lenin, who was confronted in March 1921 with strikes, peasant rebellions, the Kronstadt mutiny and opposition from within the party, Gorbachev has faced his latest crisis with enormous self-confidence. Like Lenin, he can maneuver between his opponents, use force when required and make concessions when necessary to gain the breathing space so desperately needed for reconstruction to begin. But there were several Lenins. There was the democratic Lenin of *State and Revolution*, the authoritarian Lenin of the civil war period, the economically flexible Lenin of the New Economic Policy and the petrified Leninism of the one-party state as codified by Stalin.

Which part of Lenin's legacy will Gorbachev retain? Whether he will formally reverse other practices of Lenin's—such as the banning of factions within the party—and fully democratize a body that once prided itself on its similarity to an army will demonstrate how radical a reformer he really is. The first half-decade of *perestroika* argues for continued movement toward a multiparty socialist democracy, a federation of sovereign republics and a Communist Party that will look more like the social democratic parties from which Bolshevism grew.

DRUG SUMMIT
George Black

MEDDLING AND MUDDLING IN NICARAGUA
John Spicer Nichols
Tony Jenkins

ACADEMIC FREEDOM FOR BIGOTS?
Jon Wiener

CHINESE WRITERS IN EXILE
Gayle Feldman

A 'VINELAND' CATECHISM
John Leonard

REVOLUTION OF '89

IS THIS THEN THE END OF SOCIALISM?

This is the second in a series of articles on "The revolution of '89—what it means, where it's heading, what is to be done." —The Editors

PAUL M. SWEEZY

Certain years go down in history as landmarks—the beginning or end of an era, a major turning point. Such years were 1776, 1789, 1848, 1917, 1939. Nineteen eighty-nine promises to be another worthy of addition to the list. But for what especially will it be remembered?

Some will say for the end of Communism, others for the final victory of capitalism in the struggle between capitalism and socialism. I would like to suggest a different interpretation.

Capitalism as a viable and constantly expanding system has been in existence for about 500 years. It always has been international in scope, and during the past two or three centuries it has reached global dimensions. It always has been riddled with internal contradictions, which in fact have been essential to its enormously powerful dynamic of growth. But these contradictions have generated opposition movements that proliferated and expanded along with the system. The present century has witnessed three profound and pervasive crises of capitalism: World War I, the Great Depression and World War II. As a result of these crises about a third of the world's area and population, beginning with the Russian Revolution in 1917, broke away from the global capitalist system and set about constructing economies and societies inspired by the alternative principles of socialism that were given their classic formu-

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EXCHANGE.

PATRONIZING THE ARTS?

Ann Arbor, Mich.

I welcomed Arthur Danto's article on women artists' efforts to change the definition and terms of art, and to gain recognition ["The Breakthrough Decade: Women in the Arts," Dec. 25, 1989]. Danto has for too long concentrated on artists and events of the historical canon, thus neglecting important shifts in the form, context and content of contemporary art; crucial exposure of artists working in sociopolitical themes; and equitable coverage of women and people of color.

I was concerned that this article did not appear in the Art section (is the catalogue more important than the work which gave rise to it?) but under Books & The Arts, framing a current exhibition of women artists as an already historical event (the subtitle continued this confusion). This was not the case, for example, in his review on the Primitivism exhibition. In addition, the piece needed more critical analysis and less organization around markers of male privilege.

Danto's statement "Were I asked to select the most innovative artists to represent this particular period . . . most of them would probably be women" contradicts his practice of reviewing mostly white male artists. The writing itself reveals difficulty in putting women's voice in the foreground. It isn't enough simply to enumerate some materials and modes that women began using at least twenty years ago: "reassembling furniture, building little houses, forming horses out of mud and sticks, even, in one case, making a gown." Absent a deeper analysis, he has reproduced signals which infantilize and marginalize women: little, mud animals, and the gown form as remarkable (even as he fits in a reglorification of landscape painting with a quote by a male artist).

This continues in a reference to Hannah Wilke. Danto fails to cite her piece by title, then writes "made, *one reads*, of chewing gum" (italics mine)—one of several examples where less ambivalent phraseology was in order. By comparing Wilke's piece to the "gashed and wounded Jesus of Grünewald's savage altarpiece," Danto reflects the male need to compare to a transcendent male standard, and the male inability to compare to women's lived experience of objectification, abuse and rape, overlooking the gendered political implications entirely.

Throughout the article Danto tends to universalize, which is to say, replicate, the male standard/language. His references to deconstruction needed more development to help the uninitiated reader, and Danto himself would benefit from an internalized awareness of language and gender oppression. Are women artists who "unassumingly contrive" doing something different from male artists who create? What about the space devoted to analysis of the artists' concerns, compared with art-historical, male-oriented text? In the final paragraph Danto reminds the reader to see a quilt show (no names or title) and the Man Ray and Warhol shows in the same city—which he did not equivalently list as construction/photo or silk-screen shows.

While Danto is sincere and thoughtful, he needs to move beyond a position grounded in art-historical, formalist language which is for the most part out of touch with contemporary art practices challenging the social construction of gender, race and class—a perspective implicit in *The Nation*'s mission. This article could be the springboard.

Kathy Constantinides

DANTO REPLIES

New York City

There are, at the very least, three intertwined strands of criticism in Kathy Constantinides's letter: that women artists are treated invidiously when treated at all; that women artists are statistically underrepresented as subjects of critical essays in *The Nation*; and that the very structure of discourse in these essays is, because "male standard/language," inherently oppressive of women when it deigns to discuss them at all. These range, then, from accusations of *The Nation* being antifeminine through affirmative-action complaints to deconstructionist unmaskings of sexist premises underlying the most innocent-seeming of utterances. The last category, of course, is the hardest to deal with, for the very reason that if the charge is true the language of response itself is polluted at the source, and constitutes yet another instance of oppression. So let me deal with the first two sets of charges before confronting the all-but-unanswerable third set.

Invidiousness. First, it is common practice to refer to an exhibition of work by a single artist as a show of that artist's work. It is scarcely less commonplace to refer to a show by a number of different artists not with a conjunction of their names but in some other way—and when the works are all of a kind, and especially when the kind is not commonly exhibited, by terms that designate *what* kind (like "quilt show"). A correspondent who sees in my adherence to this practice evidence of gender discrimination will be hard pressed to explain why I refer to an installation by Jenny Holzer as an installation by Jenny Holzer and not as a display of mottos in light-emitting diode notation.

Second, the back of *The Nation* is not the back of the bus. No insidious effort to keep women in their place is implied by placing a review of work by women in the Books & The Arts section when every review of art, by artists of whatever race, gender, nationality or age, has been printed in the "back of the book" since roughly 1865.

Third, someone who sees a sexual put-down rather than an extravagant artistic compliment in a comparison between an image of Hannah Wilke's and the Isenheim Altarpiece had best consider whether she is not practicing sexism in reverse.

Underrepresentation. The complaint is that if, by admission, innovative female artists outnumber innovative male artists in the period between 1970 and 1985, this fact should be reflected in the proportion of reviews given to each gender. My estimate is that the tally is probably not off by much, providing we restrict the sample to the period in question. (The reviews given to men in fact vastly outnumber those given to women when the subjects come from all periods of art and all the different artistic cultures that I have discussed in my *Nation* columns.) Thus, David Salle, Julian Schnabel, Eric Fischl and Richard Serra are matched with Cindy Sherman, Jennifer Bartlett and Jenny Holzer. I have written about Eva Hesse, but not in *The Nation*, since there was not an exhibition of her work for its readers to see. I would have written about Dorothea Rockburne, but for the most part I do not cover gallery shows, as they do not last long enough for readers of a column to see, given the amount of time it takes to move an article through the press. Anyway, I may be guilty of a degree of underrepresentation, but (a) it is not radical and (b) it is not a deliberate policy.

Deconstruction. Invidiousness can be extirpated as consciousness is raised, but it is possible to raise consciousness to a height from which nothing said by males can be other than invidious. This will be the case if the very language we all use is, somehow, "male-oriented." This may take an extreme form—seeing, for example, in "universalization" a form of male-centered discourse. (As if "male-oriented discourse" were not itself a universalization.) But that is to see in language itself the domination by a male sensibility: Words that do not universalize are not really words; language that sought only to particularize would be a staccato of demonstratives. Some deeper argument than any I have seen is required to demonstrate that the very structure of grammar is inflicted with gender inequalities and through that very fact oppressive. Like the canons of logic, truth and reason, the structures of linguistic representation cut across the differences between the genders and touch us in our essential humanity. My "language" is not especially "art-historical and formalist." There is a lot of philosophy in my pieces, a lot of psychology and anthropology and anecdote and literary theory—and anything else I can get my hands on that I think will be helpful in understanding the work I seek to address.

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EDITORIALS.

Dead Souls

It's hard to say which is more appalling, President Bush's meanspirited and militaristic budget or the cynical and craven Democratic response. Despite the outrageous figure at the bottom line—$1.23 trillion, give or take a few farthings—the budget that Congress will evacuate later in the year is likely to show nothing so much as the poverty of political will that is the hallmark of both great American parties.

A quarter of a century of imperial wars, neoliberal retreats and Reaganite counterrevolution have eroded the country's economic base to the crumbling point. The social agenda, once deferred, is now permanently abandoned. Speculation has replaced production, imports overrun exports, and gross inequality has supplanted even the modest moves toward economic justice that were made in midcentury. Americans sit silently in front of their VCRs, munch takeout fast food and throw another Visa bill in the wastebasket while their incomes, their standard of living, the quality of their work and their dreams for the future are squandered or ignored by the political structure—from which they are, understandably, profoundly alienated. The only enlivening politics is imported, along with the crude oil and the fast cars, from abroad. And for titillation and self-satisfaction, not for use.

The rationale for paralysis is the budget deficit, a

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statistical fiction that has been enshrined as the word of God. Money for housing? The word is No. National health plan? Uh-uh. Social investment, public enterprise, child care, support for the elderly, research and development, progressive taxation, antitrust enforcement, environmental action, job security, reindustrialization, economic justice—a thousand times No. Not one of those is affordable, Republicans assert and Democrats agree, because of the magnitude of the debt and the budgetary imbalance.

The fact is that there's plenty of money in this wealthiest of all nations. It just has to be shifted from the fat accounts to the lean. There were billions to be found when the S&Ls had to be bailed out. The warlords in Washington easily come up with trillions for murderous weapons and useless space shields. There are funds to be found for *contras*, death squads, defense forces and anticommunist crusades in every cranny of the Third World. Only when the health and welfare and hopes of ordinary Americans are concerned is the sanctity of the current accounting system invoked.

There is no dearth of new ideas, as Gary Hart used to say (remember him?), but of new politics to effect change. Some politicians, think tanks and freelance idea mongers have put forth very exciting programs that could begin to remake America. The Congressional Black Caucus will issue its own annual budget proposal in a few weeks, and once again it will be dismissed as "utopian," or indulgent of "special interests." And without a mass-based politics to support them, the new ideas will float into space.

Where is the booming populist force that could be seen in the Jackson campaign of 1988, the mobilizations that helped elect blacks and progressives to high offices in the past few years, the energies released by feminist, environmental and anti-imperialist actions? Someone recently said on ABC's *Nightline* that this is perhaps the most boring period in U.S. political life since the 1920s. The country is stuck dead center, with the emphasis on dead. Democracy is in the streets all over the world. Here it's in cold storage.

Cartagena High

Perhaps the first thing to be said about George Bush's drug summit in Cartagena, Colombia, is that it is not really a summit. To be accurate, one would have to call it something else: a *durbar*, perhaps—the ceremony in which the Mogul emperors used to receive the visits of their tributary princes. It will doubtless produce a set of honeyed phrases about shared goals and common interests, after which the United States will claim to see the light at the end of the tunnel in the drug war, and the Peruvians, Colombians and Bolivians will go home bemoaning yet again American ignorance and arrogance.

Colombia's Medellín cartel may populate our most lurid nightmares, but Peru, which produces half the world's supply of coca leaf, faces a much more urgent crisis. For Peruvians, however, cocaine is not the issue. Much more important is their ruined economy and the dirty war against Sendero Luminoso ("Shining Path") guerrillas. Under Social Democrat Alan García, Peru has all but collapsed. Sendero has made much of the country ungovernable; some fear it could seize power sooner rather than later.

But first the conservative novelist Mario Vargas Llosa, darling of Western commentators, will get a shot at the presidency if, as seems likely, his Fredemo alliance wins Peru's election in April. The radical free-market therapy that Vargas Llosa prescribes draws heavily on the ideas of Hernando de Soto, whose book *El Otro Sendero* ("The Other Path") has been a neoconservative icon since its publication in 1986. The book is crammed with photographs of de Soto's ideals of petty entrepreneurialism—the squatters and new urban migrants who have shaken off the bureaucratic state and are now self-made "informal" bus operators and street vendors. But missing from the book is the best paradigm of de Sotoism—Peru's coca planters. As many as 300,000 families have escaped ruin by settling in the Upper Huallaga Valley, where most of the coca is grown. What Americans see as a criminal conspiracy is in fact the only real hub of growth in the Peruvian economy.

On February 1 several Fredemo leaders appeared at a Washington conference co-sponsored by George Washington University and the Washington Office on Latin America. For all the suave intellectual demeanor of their novelist-candidate, these men talked like political primitives. One of them, Fernando de Trazegnies, waxed rhapsodic on the fight against Sendero—leftist insurgency as a pathogen attacking a sick body, to be counteracted by the antibiotics of the state (paying scrupulous respect, of course, to human rights, two-track reform policies and all that). This had an eerie familiarity: Metaphors from the pathology lab have been popular among the Central American far right for years, and any Salvadoran or Guatemalan military officer would have been proud to make such a speech. Next, retired Gen. Sinecio Jarama, a military adviser to Fredemo, demanded more U.S. aid for psychological warfare and specialized military operations. He will probably get it, for Washington is already pointing to the military successes of the Colombian government—as if Peru, where coca is the lifeblood of hundreds of thousands of peasants, were Colombia, where the enemy is a small mafia of powerful cocaine capitalists.

To aid the attack on coca production—our war—we have greatly enhanced the power of Peru's brutal armed forces to fight Sendero Luminoso—their war. In the process, Sendero has become the peasants' protector. During García's term of office, 8,000 people have died in the two conflicts, which are now so intertwined as to be indistinguishable. In the Upper Huallaga Valley, U.S. trainers are hunkered down in the poorly conceived Santa Lucia compound (which visitors describe as a Vietnam-style firebase) listening to the menacing noises of the jungle. Discussions are under way to build a second base in the valley where U.S. Special Forces would train the Peruvian military. Last month George Bush proposed to increase the Pentagon's share of the drug war budget by 37 percent.

In the producer countries, almost nobody believes that the supply side is where the drug war should be fought. The

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Latin American consensus was lucidly expressed in last July's issue of *The Atlantic* by Peruvian journalist Gustavo Gorriti: The *narcotraficantes* are simply "primitive but efficient capitalists . . . catering to a hungry market—the 25 million Americans who use or abuse drugs, and who pay $50 billion each year to get them," a sum almost equal to the gross national products of Bolivia, Peru and Colombia combined. By comparison, the United States will send the three Andean countries $206 million in security assistance this year and about $125 million in economic aid. Increases will now be conditional on "sound economic policies" à la Vargas Llosa, and on performance in the drug war—which is absurd, since drug production is a response to economic collapse (and external demand) in the first place.

Most members of Congress unquestioningly support the basic premises of the war on drugs; their "criticisms," then, are merely dotty variants on Bush's theme. Some, newly sensitive after Panama to charges of *Yanqui* imperialism, now call for burden sharing in the drug war: Get the Japanese and the Europeans involved in a "grand alliance for drug defense." In the age of *glasnost*, others cry, why not enlist the Soviet Union too, as if an appetite for cocaine is one of Moscow's problems. There is also some utopian talk these days of purchasing—and then burning—the entire coca crop of Bolivia and Peru. At the Washington conference, the State Department's Michael Skol made the delicious proposal that enterprising coca farmers should be encouraged to grow macadamia nuts instead. Someone should warn Hawaii.

By that time the ballroom was half empty. Most of the Peruvians were out in the hallways or standing in knots around the refreshment tables, talking animatedly about their real problems—the war, the economy, the potentially fatal cleavage between state and society. Up on the platform official Washington babbled on, its war on drugs, rather like the Upper Huallaga Valley, lost in the clouds.

GEORGE BLACK

Muzzled Experts

A decade ago, Americans got a good chuckle out of Ronald Reagan's assertion that trees are the main culprits responsible for air pollution. There is growing evidence that a more serious joke is now being played on American taxpayers through the manipulation and politicization of scientific research by right-wing ideologues throughout the federal bureaucracy.

In January, the House Select Committee on Hunger heard evidence that Reagan appointees in the Department of Agriculture had tampered with scientific findings about the beneficial nutritional effects of the widely supported Women, Infants and Children's (WIC) program, which provides supplementary food to high risk pregnant women and their babies.

The Department of Agriculture spent five years and $6 million studying the nutritional impact of WIC supplements—whose benefits had already been decisively proved by impartial studies at Harvard and Yale universities, among others. The U.S.D.A. findings paralleled the earlier conclusions that WIC reduces incidence of low birthweight, the leading cause of infant death. But, according to the General Accounting Office, conservatives at the U.S.D.A. didn't like those findings, and by deleting key conclusions and incorporating "errors and misleading statements," their alterations could "mislead the reader about the WIC program."

Outrageous as the Department of Agriculture's actions were, they are not a lone example of tampering with research by Reaganites. Such practices have intimidated scientists in several federal agencies in recent years. Last May, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's James Hansen told Congressional investigators that he was pressured by White House staff to weaken his testimony on human contributions to global warming. In March of 1985 Fish and Wildlife Service scientists warned Congress about inadequate attention to the ecological effects of irrigation waste runoff and wetland depletion. The scientists told Congressional investigators that they had been warned by superiors in the Interior Department to quit environmental organizations, cease speaking in public and restrict their communications with members of Congress. When the superintendent of the Everglades National Park prepared testimony in opposition to offshore oil and gas drilling for a presidential task force, he was silenced by superiors.

Oil development was the issue in recent government policy forbidding the oil industry's construction of gravel causeways in sensitive Arctic waters adjacent to Alaska's North Slope. Scientists from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Alaska district office of the Army Corps of Engineers, the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service vigorously opposed additional causeways, citing the severe impact on migratory fish and other marine life. The new policy came under heavy assault from oil companies in the waning days of the Reagan Administration. Within a few weeks, the Bush White House–Interior Department–Corps of Engineers team had pushed aside the scientists' concerns and repealed the causeway ban.

The Administration's misuse of science is not always invoked to minimize troubling problems. Drug czar William Bennett recently alleged that the "estimated frequent use of cocaine" has doubled since 1985, despite National Institute of Drug Abuse evidence that the number of those using the drug actually dropped by 48 percent between 1985 and 1988. If Bennett had benefited from the math and science curriculum he advocates, he would know that the doubling he decries is fictitious, the result only of the higher proportion of heavy users among a diminishing number of those who take drugs.

Elected officials and bureaucrats often play fast and loose with numbers. But what emerged during the Reagan Administration, and appears to be continuing under Bush, is the systematic bending of scientific research to accommodate the demands of powerful conservative constituents.

GEORGE MILLER AND JOHN LAWRENCE

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BEAT THE DEVIL.

Greens, Gas and Capital

Because George Bush has the plumage and distinctive markings of a Connecticut Yankee, people sometimes foolishly imagine that he is imbued with some of the traits of upper-class Republicanism, including reverence for the conservationist ethic articulated back in the nineteenth century by Gifford Pinchot, father of the Forest Service. Pinchot's goal was to manage resources on a sustainable basis and to nourish nature as an amenity by rational state planning.

By psychological bent and intellectual disposition Bush is actually a slash-and-burn man who spent his formative business years in Texas prospecting for oil. For him the lily had less appeal than the gusher, outshining Solomon in all his glory. Bush sets true north by the imperatives of the oil industry, so it's foolish to imagine that when you draw the verbal drapery aside, Bush is anything other than a zealot for oil drilling off the California coastline, in the Arctic wilderness or in and around the environs of his granny's grave.

On February 5 environmentalists pronounced themselves disappointed by the President's address to an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Bush's speech was a soothing signal to business that it need not fear unpalatable edicts in the immediate or even medium future. The bottom line was solidly drawn: "Wherever possible we believe that market mechanisms should be applied and that our policies should be consistent with economic growth and free-market principles." When it was over, the environmentalists in the audience repined. In the words of a Sierra Club executive, "It was a gross disappointment."

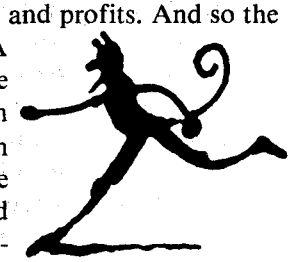
But why was it a gross disappointment? That's like saying that Nero gave a "disappointing speech" about religious tolerance for Christians. Bush's invocation of the free market was solidly in line with bipartisan theory on capitalism and the environment, as formulated by liberal Democrats in the late 1970s. Greens should study the evolution of this theory closely, as it holds many lessons for them. The best recent outline may be found in an essay by Daniel Faber and James O'Connor in the second issue of *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism*, published last summer out of Santa Cruz (Box 8467, Santa Cruz, CA 95061; send $5 for individuals and $15 for institutions).

By the mid-1970s, as Faber and O'Connor recount it, the environmental movement that had begun to swell at the start of that decade had spawned thousands of groups fighting for conservation and preservation of natural resources. In 1975, 5.5 million people contributed financially to nineteen leading national organizations, with perhaps another 20 million contributing to more than 40,000 local groups. By the end of the decade Congress had passed more than twenty major laws regulating consumer products, the environment and workplace conditions.

What many environmentalists do not admit is that all those legislative triumphs for the environmental movement in the 1970s imposed real constraints on capitalist profitability. Faber and O'Connor write:

"It is important to stress that when environmental regulation raises the cost of capital in raw materials (such as copper) and capital goods industries (i.e. industries producing inputs for other industries) higher costs are generalized throughout the economy for all industries. The same regulations applied to consumer goods industries affect the cost of only one or a handful of commodities. In the 1970s, nearly one half of all capital investment was made in polluting industries—e.g. oil, petrochemicals, electrical power, strip mining, metal working—supplying inputs to other industries. These were hardest hit by environmental regulations, which therefore increased the cost of capital throughout the economy as a whole."

Business soon began to add up and publicize the numbers. The lobbying group known as the Business Roundtable estimated that the operations of six regulatory agencies caused $2.6 billion in incremental costs to forty-eight companies in 1977, about 10 percent of their total capital expenditures. In 1980 the government's Council on Environmental Quality estimated that the United States spent about $271 billion on pollution abatement between 1972 and 1979. In the increasingly savage international business environment these costs were affecting markets, sales and profits. And so the corporate counterattack began. A torrent of advertising about the costs of knee-jerk environmentalism spread through the press, usually on the editorial pages. Conservative and neoliberal periodicals provided intellectual covering fire as the corporate sappers dashed forward to place explosives under the regulatory edicts and enforcement procedures put in place earlier in the 1970s.



With Ronald Reagan came counterrevolution. Fox upon fox was assigned the appropriate chicken coop. Faber and O'Connor write, "Compliance with environmental laws was replaced with 'cost-effective' reforms—pollution taxes and credits, effluent charges, markets for pollution rights, all designed to increase capital's flexibility to meet regulation requirement but continue polluting in a profitable manner."

The theory behind these "cost-effective" reforms was most clearly expounded in the *Harvard Law Review* of January 1979 by one of Senator Edward Kennedy's chief aides, Stephen Breyer, now a judge in Massachusetts. Breyer argued an old business favorite: Environmental hazards could best be dealt with by market mechanisms in which "rights" to pollute would be traded. In other words, the country would be divided into zones and a pollution index would be established for each zone, with companies permitted a certain amount of pollution within the overall permissible limit. But if Company A used only 25 percent of its pollution rights, it could trade the other 75 percent to another company in the same area which had reached its own limit. To put it crudely, the Kennedy neoliberals wanted to organize a market in Cancer Bonds. This is the intellectual tradition, by now firmly anchored in bipartisan con-

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ALEXANDER COCKBURN

sensus, that Bush invoked on February 5. To suppose that he would have returned to the regulatory spirit of the mid-1970s is to misunderstand U.S. political history over the past fifteen years.

Environmentalists should indulge in a bit of self-criticism. In the early and mid-1970s they played the game of rising liberal expectations, assuming that their pluralist conception of the political economy would in turn permit, at the level not only of popular awareness but of state policy, a new, environmentally aware attitude toward cost and regulation. In the late 1970s the capitalists bit back, and successfully set labor and environmentalists at each other's throats. Since a good many "greens" are middle class and essentially antilabor in philosophical outlook, the antagonism was real. Also, by the end of the 1970s environmentalism had moved mostly from populist frenzy to managerial caution. Anyone wanting to see how far this has gone should study the current issue of *Fortune*, which hails the constructive amity now prevailing between business and environmental executives.

Relatives and Close Friends of the Dead

Here in front of me is a letter from Walter Robinson of *The Boston Globe*, who is mad at some harsh words of mine about that paper's early coverage of the Panama invasion. Robinson says that many reporters were "thunderstruck" by the fact that "almost without exception, those who suffered the most from the invasion welcomed it. A CBS poll in Panama found the same thing—more than 90 percent of Panamanians supported it."

Let's take a look at this CBS poll. The sample of 800 Panamanians questioned by CBS pollsters yielded 92 percent approval of the invasion. Of those interviewed 10 percent said they had a relative or close friend killed in the invasion, and 23 percent said they had a relative or close friend killed or wounded.

Now, given that the population of Panama is 2.4 million, and given the 10 percent figure in the CBS poll, if each Panamanian had only one relative or close friend, we would be left with a total of 240,000 Panamanians killed in the invasion. Absurd. Plainly, these bereft Panamanians held dead relatives or close friends in common. So how many relatives or close friends must the average Panamanian have, if we accept the official U.S. figure of 250 Panamanians killed in the invasion? I called up a friend of mine who is a practicing statistician and after punching at his calculator for a while, here's what he worked out:

On the basis of the CBS poll, and for this poll to fit with the official death toll of 250, each Panamanian would have to have 1,011 relatives or close friends. Even postulating a Panamanian anthropology of vast families and intense bonhomie, this is unlikely. Thinking hard of how many relatives and close friends I can identify, I would say—assuming a spirit of forgiveness on the part of the ones I've insulted lately—maybe fifty. But let's double that and assume that on average each Panamanian has 100 relatives or close friends, and let's say that the CBS poll was correct and 10 percent of Panamanians had a relative or close friend killed. What death rate in the invasion would that imply? It would mean 2,527 Panamanians were killed. Conclusion: Either the CBS poll was severely flawed, or the Pentagon is lying about the 250 figure, or both.

Credentials Fight

Big Vic, helmsman of this little craft, tells me that he got a phone call from the PR person at Guilford Press. She took issue with my column two weeks ago about child abuse, in which I wrote that Kee MacFarlane's (she was the person who first interviewed the McMartin children) only credential was a certificate as "welder-sculptor" from an Ohio welding school. The woman from Guilford pointed out that among her professional credentials MacFarlane boasts a master's degree from the University of Maryland's School of Social Work and has served as associate clinical professor in the department of psychiatry at the University of Southern California School of Medicine.

As far as I'm concerned, the fact that MacFarlane has a degree in social work is about as relevant to her activities in the McMartin case as saying she has a degree in Frisbee flying. I put in the welding degree because at least it showed she learned one worthwhile craft. The average "social work" curriculum is an appalling mix of pop psychology and bogus psychological theory. Regarding MacFarlane's credentials, Glenn Stevens, the former co-prosecutor in the McMartin case who decided the charges didn't hold water, told the Memphis *Commercial Appeal*, "She enjoyed having herself held out as a child therapist and an expert when in fact she doesn't have a license other than a driver's license." Checking with U.S.C., my colleague Peter Rothberg finds that MacFarlane has had an "unpaid, voluntary faculty appointment" as an assistant professor since 1985, which of course was after she interviewed the McMartin children.

The McMartin madness continues. The District Attorney of Los Angeles County, Ira Reiner, has called for a new trial for Ray Buckey on the thirteen counts on which a mistrial was declared on January 18. Reiner is in a race for Attorney General and can't afford to be called soft on child abusers after Buckey and his mother were acquitted on fifty-two counts of the indictment.

Meanwhile, it has just been announced that the infant mortality rate among blacks and Latinos in Los Angeles County rose 17 percent from 1987 to 1988, while dropping 12 percent among Anglos. The percentage of babies born weighing less than 5 1/2 pounds rose 17 percent overall and 32 percent among blacks. According to an L.A. County health official cited in the *Los Angeles Times*, these numbers represent "a turn for the worse" after several decades of improvement. Here is horrifying child abuse. Why don't MacFarlane, Reiner and the rest of them start denouncing the real satanic rites being practiced by the butchers of social programs snugly ensconced in the White House and on Capitol Hill?

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BELTWAY BANDITS.

DAVID CORN

■ Burn This

"Sources" and "methods" are sacrosanct words in the national security community. The terms refer to secret agents and technological means, ranging from bugs to satellites, used to collect intelligence. Government agencies normally go to great lengths to protect sources—except, it seems, when the source offers damaging information on an ally.

Sometime after the slaying of the Jesuit priests in El Salvador, Col. Carlos Armando Aviles, head of psychological operations for the military high command, went to a member of the U.S. Military Group in El Salvador. Aviles had some information regarding the massacre. He had heard indirectly that Col. Guillermo Alfredo Benavides, commandant of El Salvador's military school and temporary commander of a unit of the elite Atlacatl Battalion, was involved. Aviles's tip was passed on to Col. Milton Menjivar, commanding officer of the U.S. MilGroup, who then relayed it to Col. Rene Emilio Ponce, Chief of Staff of the Salvadoran Army. While sharing this intelligence with Ponce, Menjivar revealed that Aviles was the source. Ponce's reaction was predictable. He called in Aviles, who denied squealing on a fellow officer. Aviles was given a polygraph examination, which he flunked, and was placed under arrest. In the past Aviles has provided information to U.S. Congressional aides about human rights abuses and corruption in the military. This, one of the Congressional aides told me, has not endeared him to the MilGroup, the U.S. Embassy or the Salvadoran military command.

At a recent Congressional hearing, Bernard Aronson, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, defended the way Aviles was handled by U.S. and Salvadoran authorities. He argued that Aviles's name had to be revealed to Ponce in order to demonstrate the credibility of the information. But an angry Representative Howard Berman protested that it made no sense to snitch on Aviles, given the need to protect those who come forward with information on atrocities committed by the Salvadoran forces. If Aviles felt it was safe to take the information to Ponce, he obviously would have done so. The "burning" of Aviles, Berman suggested, is likely to discourage other members of the military from offering information on abuses. A conspiracy-minded person might conclude that was precisely the intention.

■ Stealth *Contras*

The killing of an off-duty U.S. soldier in Panama was cited by President Bush as partial justification for sending 26,000 troops to "secure" the country. The killing of an American civilian in Nicaragua provoked a far milder reaction. On New Year's Day, Sister Maureen Courtney (an American citizen), two Nicaraguan nuns and a Catholic bishop were driving toward the town of La Rosita when their pickup truck was ambushed. An explosion ripped off the left side of Courtney's head, killing her instantly. A bullet killed Sister Teresa de Jesus Rosales Dickson. The State Department immediately denied that *contra* forces were operating in that region and repeated the claim nine days after the attack.

These statements represented another, shall we say, intelligence failure. Press reports and an investigation conducted by Americas Watch concluded that a *contra* unit carried out the attack on the road to La Rosita. But as of this writing there has been no condemnation from the Administration. (The Americas Watch study also reports on a grisly episode in 1988 when Sandinista troops captured and brutally executed six *contra* collaborators near Siuna.)

Some House Democrats haven't ignored the episode. Last month, eighty-eight of them sent a letter to George Bush noting that the *contra* attack violated the conditions placed on current U.S. aid to the *contras* and requesting that the White House verify the conclusions of the Americas Watch report. Although the assault on Courtney and her companions didn't spark the uproar that the slayings of six Jesuits in El Salvador did, it is not likely to be forgotten quickly. If the Sandinistas win the February 25 elections, the question of what to do with the *contras* will be on Congress's agenda once again, and members opposed to any further assistance to the *contras* will bring up the barbaric killing of Sister Maureen and Sister Teresa.

■ With Friends Like These

The White House, untroubled about the fate of Maureen Courtney, is overly disturbed by Sandra Marquardt, who works for Greenpeace. Last month the Administration sponsored a symposium at the White House on aid to Eastern Europe. One of the participating foundations suggested that Marquardt attend. Her specialty is pesticides, and recently she has been monitoring the effort, spearheaded by Agriculture Secretary Clayton Yeutter, to persuade chemical companies to donate pesticides to Poland. This pesticide campaign is part of a larger U.S. endeavor to send agricultural supplies to Poland.

Marquardt voiced her worries about the pesticide program at a January 9 meeting with officials of the Department of Agriculture, who said they probably would not promote the export to Poland of pesticides banned or unregistered in the United States. But U.S. chemical companies, which are eager to enter the Polish market, may send on their own any pesticide they wish, and Poland has asked for several compounds that cannot be sold in this country or are severely restricted. Marquardt, who works for the only environmental group with an office in the Eastern bloc, wished to attend the White House symposium as part of her effort to keep track of which pesticides are going to Poland.

But the White House said no. A White House official told the foundation that had invited Marquardt that she was not welcome because of a Greenpeace action to halt testing of Trident nuclear missiles. A testy White House spokesperson told me there was no room for her at the conference. With more than 300 gathered to discuss aid to Poland, there was no space for one concerned for the health of Poles and their nation's environment.

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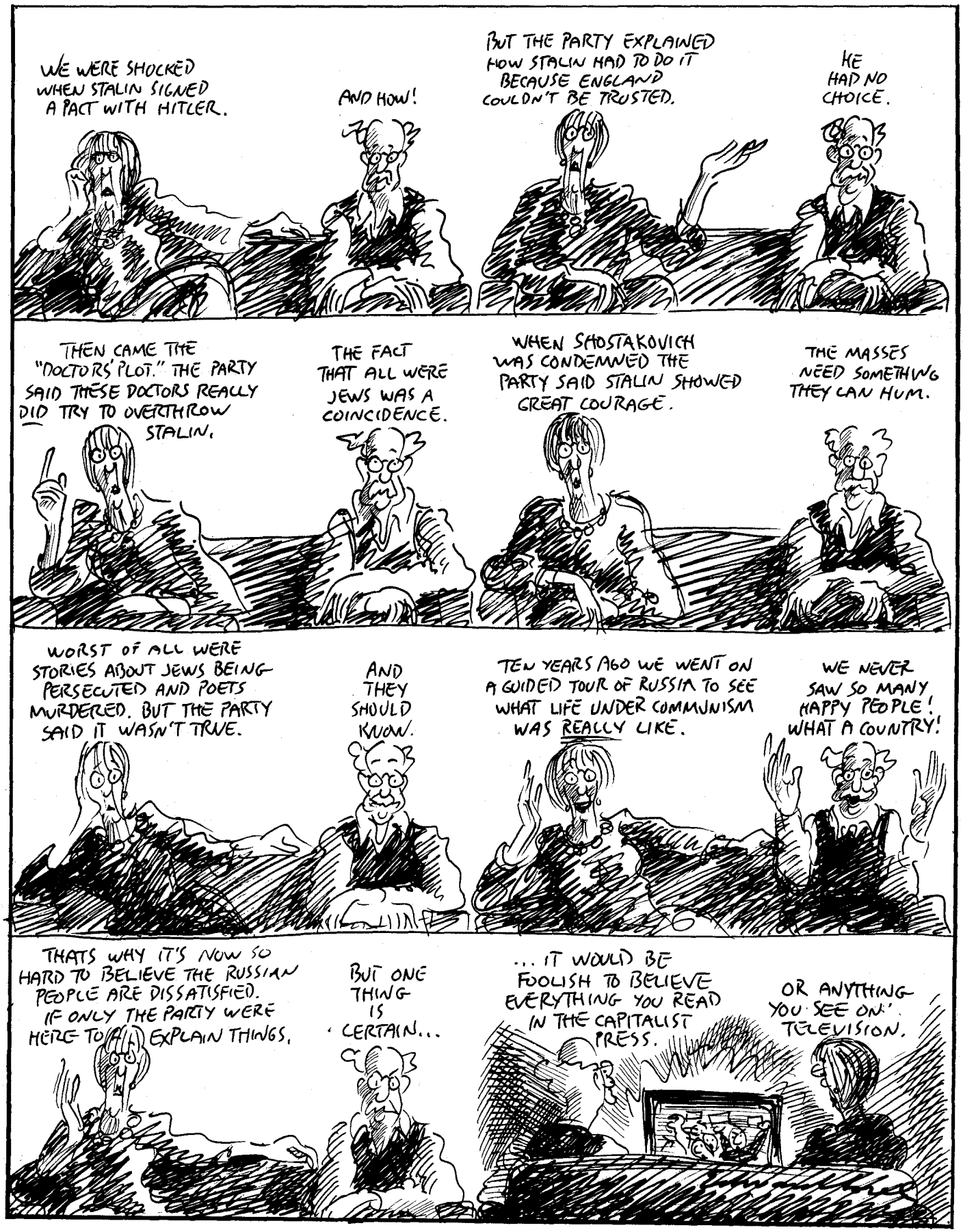
Red Sails in the Sunset

EDWARD SOREL


WE WERE SHOCKED WHEN STALIN SIGNED A PACT WITH HITLER.
AND HOW!
BUT THE PARTY EXPLAINED HOW STALIN HAD TO DO IT BECAUSE ENGLAND COULDN'T BE TRUSTED.
HE HAD NO CHOICE.
THEN CAME THE "DOCTORS' PLOT." THE PARTY SAID THESE DOCTORS REALLY DID TRY TO OVERTHROW STALIN.
THE FACT THAT ALL WERE JEWS WAS A COINCIDENCE.
WHEN SHOSTAKOVICH WAS CONDEMNED THE PARTY SAID STALIN SHOWED GREAT COURAGE.
THE MASSES NEED SOMETHING THEY CAN HUM.
WORST OF ALL WERE STORIES ABOUT JEWS BEING PERSECUTED AND POETS MURDERED. BUT THE PARTY SAID IT WASN'T TRUE.
AND THEY SHOULD KNOW.
TEN YEARS AGO WE WENT ON A GUIDED TOUR OF RUSSIA TO SEE WHAT LIFE UNDER COMMUNISM WAS REALLY LIKE.
WE NEVER SAW SO MANY HAPPY PEOPLE! WHAT A COUNTRY!
THATS WHY IT'S NOW SO HARD TO BELIEVE THE RUSSIAN PEOPLE ARE DISSATISFIED. IF ONLY THE PARTY WERE HERE TO EXPLAIN THINGS.
BUT ONE THING IS CERTAIN...
... IT WOULD BE FOOLISH TO BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU READ IN THE CAPITALIST PRESS.
OR ANYTHING YOU SEE ON TELEVISION.

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ARTICLES.

ELECTORAL MEDDLING

Get the N.E.D. Out of Nicaragua

JOHN SPICER NICHOLS

The Bush Administration, with eager Congressional support, is pumping millions of dollars into Nicaragua in hopes of blocking the re-election of President Daniel Ortega. However, if the Nicaraguan government were to fund similar campaign activities in the United States, the recipients and conduits of that money would be subject to stiff civil and criminal penalties. Ironically, a major reason that federal laws flatly ban foreign financing of U.S. political campaigns is the long history of interference in presidential elections in this country by the Somoza family dictatorship that ruled Nicaragua until it was overthrown in 1979 by the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

Aside from the hypocrisy of U.S. funding of political parties and organizations opposed to the Sandinistas, the policy appears to have backfired. The scramble for U.S. money has seriously divided the already quarrelsome Nicaraguan opposition while supporting the Sandinistas' charge that their opponents are tools of an adversary government.

In March 1963 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee met behind closed doors to hear about the activities of I. Irving Davidson, a Washington-based publicity agent for Nicaraguan President Anastasio Somoza García and his son and successor, Luis. Evidence presented to the committee indicated that Davidson, a registered foreign agent on retainer from the Somoza family, contributed to both the Democratic and Republican parties in an attempt to influence the election of a U.S. President favorable to the Nicaraguan family dictatorship. Davidson worked behind the scenes of the 1960 Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles to help Lyndon Johnson win the nomination. Having failed in that mission, Davidson went to the Republican National Convention in Chicago, where he spread money around in behalf of the Nixon campaign.

Davidson's testimony was part of a Senate investigation into the influence of nondiplomatic agents of foreign governments on U.S. politics and governmental operations. He and other lobbyists for foreign interests who testified before the committee admitted paying large sums to Washington power brokers to gain access to key decision makers in government, to curry favor with the press corps and to bolster the campaigns of many prominent politicians.

John Spicer Nichols, an associate professor of communications at Pennsylvania State University, is writing a history of the Nicaraguan opposition newspaper La Prensa.

"It is one thing for a U.S. citizen to represent or advise a foreign government or interest group in a highly complicated proceeding before the Tariff Commission," Chair J. William Fulbright told the committee, "and quite another to attempt to influence the press, the public or the government on basic foreign policy issues." Most of his Congressional colleagues agreed and voted overwhelmingly to amend the Foreign Agents Registration Act with a prohibition against campaign contributions from U.S. agents working on behalf of foreign principals. The amendment, which was signed into law in 1966, also made it a felony to accept such contributions.

In the wake of the Watergate scandal in the 1970s, Congress further tightened the prohibitions on foreign participation in U.S. elections. Investigators for the Senate Watergate committee found indications of continued foreign financing of U.S. campaigns, including evidence suggesting that Anastasio Somoza Debayle, who had inherited the Nicaraguan presidency on the death of his older brother Luis, had continued the family tradition by secretly funneling money into the Nixon campaign.

"I do not think foreign nationals have any business in our political campaigns," argued Democratic Senator Lloyd Bentsen of Texas in 1974. "They cannot vote in our elections, so why should we allow them to finance our elections? Their loyalties lie elsewhere." Bentsen introduced an amendment to the Federal Election Campaign Act that eliminated political contributions from all foreign nationals, not just principals or their agents. His amendment passed the Senate by a vote of 89 to 0 and was signed into law.

Thirteen years later, Bentsen was on the Senate floor again to offer another amendment on foreign financing of domestic politics. However, this time it was to authorize the expenditure of at least $250,000 from 1988 federal appropriations for elements of the "free press and the democratic civic opposition inside Nicaragua." Bentsen said that Congress had a special obligation to support the anti-Sandinista news media so that opposition politicians could have a voice in Nicaraguan domestic affairs. Taking Bentsen's lead, Congress has allocated increasing amounts of subsequent appropriations for political activity inside Nicaragua.

The Nicaraguan government's reaction has been ambiguous. At first its National Assembly echoed the U.S. Congress by passing legislation making it a criminal offense punishable by a three-to-twelve-year jail term to accept U.S. government funds. Under the law, Nicaraguan organizations, such as labor unions and church groups, could receive funds from countries other than the United States; however, all external financing of political parties was banned.

Nevertheless, the Sandinistas had to face harsh realities in preparing for the upcoming elections. With a faltering economy, and under international pressure to make concessions to its civilian opposition as a means of ending years of military opposition from U.S.-backed counterrevolution-

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aries, the government had little choice but to allow foreign funding of the campaign. Under a new electoral law passed in 1989, Nicaraguan political parties may accept U.S. support on the condition that half of all the funds they receive be turned over to the government electoral council to help pay the administrative costs of the election.

The change in Nicaraguan election rules coincided with a change in U.S. policy. Under a bipartisan accord with Congress on March 24, 1989, the new Bush Administration placed greater emphasis on overt funding of the domestic political opposition as a means of unseating the Sandinista government. The *contras* and covert actions received less emphasis.

The primary conduit for the overt funding is the National Endowment for Democracy, a quasi-governmental foundation created by the Reagan Administration to foster its version of democracy around the world. Since 1984 the N.E.D. has channeled $5.6 million to a variety of Nicaraguan opposition groups and another $1 million to anti-Sandinista propaganda mills elsewhere in Central America. The opposition also has received untold millions from the C.I.A., Oliver North's covert network and other private groups, many of which also funded the *contras.* A primary recipient is *La Prensa*, the Managua newspaper owned by opposition presidential candidate Violeta Chamorro.

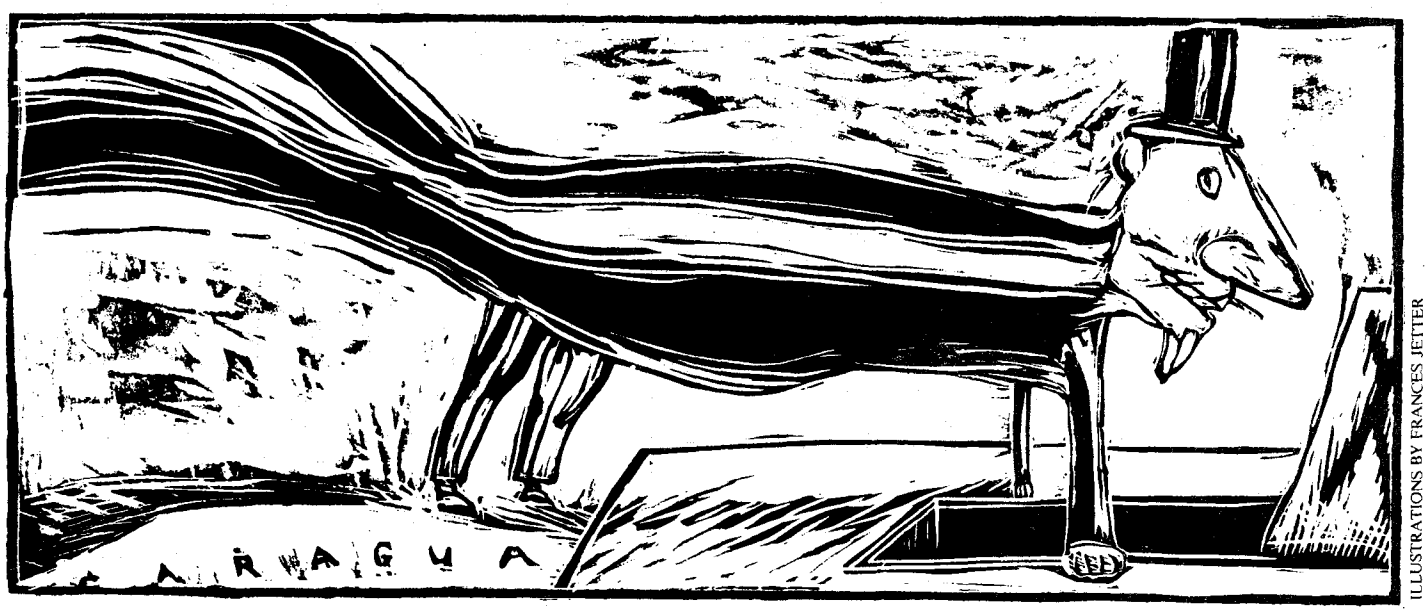
In October 1989 Congress authorized the N.E.D. to spend another $9 million on the Nicaraguan elections. Approximately $1.8 million of the appropriation is earmarked for the National Opposition Union (UNO), the U.S.-backed opposition coalition led by Chamorro. Those funds are subject to the 50 percent withholding by the Nicaraguan electoral council. Another $2.2 million is directed to private Nicaraguan institutes that are legally independent of but politically allied with UNO. Three election monitoring groups, including one headed by former President Jimmy Carter, also received altogether slightly more than $1 million to observe and evaluate the February 25 vote. The remainder is being spent on discretionary grants or is to cover administrative costs.

In 1983, when then-Secretary of State George Shultz went to Capitol Hill to defend the Administration's proposal for creating the N.E.D., he assured skeptical members of Congress that the new endowment was not intended "to support this or that party in a given government" or "to threaten or unseat some existing government." The enabling legislation that eventually emerged from Congress prohibited the N.E.D. from spending money "to finance the campaigns of candidates for public office."

Despite this restriction, Administration and N.E.D. officials maintain that the endowment's current activities in Nicaragua are legal and appropriate. They argue that none of the money is going to a specific candidate or to campaign activities. Rather, they say, the funding is intended to help build UNO's "infrastructure" (that is, to purchase vehicles and office equipment, but not to fund specific campaign activities, such as printing political propaganda) and to support voter registration, poll watching and political education by nonpartisan groups.

In practice, however, N.E.D. funding is partisan aid for the opposition coalition. "The line being drawn between support for the electoral process and direct campaign support makes a distinction without a difference," reported the nongovernmental Washington Office on Latin America. The supposedly nonpartisan institutes funded by the N.E.D. have overlapping leadership with UNO and share facilities, resources and the primary goal of defeating the Sandinistas. For example, the N.E.D. treats Chamorro's newspaper *La Prensa* as a nonpartisan recipient. Further, the U.S. dollars designated for noncampaign activities are fungible and free other UNO resources so they can be used in partisan undertakings.

George Vickers, a Brooklyn College professor who is studying the Nicaraguan election, observed that power struggles within UNO over control of the U.S. funds are seriously undercutting the alliance's chances for victory, and other traditionally strong opposition parties that are unable or unwilling to feed at the U.S. trough have been weakened by N.E.D. support of their competitors. To compound



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those problems, although UNO has suffered the negative publicity of receiving N.E.D. money, as of late January only a small portion of the most recent $9 million installment had been disbursed. At the same time, news of the U.S. aid package was causing alternative, less tainted sources of campaign contributions to dry up. Speaking at a Washington conference last month, Vickers said that, because of bureaucratic footdragging in both Washington and Managua and complications from the U.S. trade embargo on Nicaragua, the N.E.D. money will be dumped at the last minute on a historically corrupt and disorganized political opposition that is ill-equipped to use it in any meaningful way.

In short, N.E.D. funding of the Nicaraguan domestic political opposition probably has done more harm than good to the U.S. policy of unseating the Sandinistas and, in the process, has retarded the development of legitimate opposition parties.

Although some prohibitions against foreign financing of U.S. political campaigns were enacted in partial response to the Somozas' shenanigans in the 1960s and 1970s, concern about the problem is as old as the Republic. George Washington forced the recall of a French minister, Citizen Genet, for interfering in U.S. domestic affairs, and in his Farewell Address, the President warned against "the insidious wiles of foreign influence . . . since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government."

Yet the N.E.D.'s annual expenditure of millions of tax dollars to manipulate public opinion and the political process in other countries is among the most popular programs in Washington today. The N.E.D. has become the moderate face of U.S. intervention, and the Capitol Hill mainstream increasingly sees it as the best vehicle for the United States to respond to the rapidly changing political landscape around the world.

Only a few politicians—mostly on the ideological poles—see N.E.D. activities as a long-term threat to the development of democracy abroad. One of them is Representative Hank Brown, a conservative Republican from Colorado who is strongly anti-Sandinista. "Liberals—and prudent conservatives—believe that it is a contradiction to try to promote free elections by interfering in them," he wrote in *The New York Times* in June 1984. "But this is exactly what N.E.D. has done."

However, following favorable U.S. press notices of N.E.D. involvement in the recent elections in Costa Rica, Chile, Haiti, Panama and the Philippines, those voices of caution are rarely heard. With increasing Congressional support, the N.E.D. continues to pour money into foreign media, unions and political institutes—many of them allied with right-of-center political parties. The endowment also has targeted elections in Peru later this year. Unless N.E.D.'s ham-handed performance in the Nicaraguan elections forces a rethinking of this hypocritical and counterproductive policy, overt meddling in the domestic politics of other nations may eclipse covert action as the keystone of U.S. foreign policy in the 1990s. □

ELECTORAL MUDDLING

The Unmaking of Doña Violeta

TONY JENKINS

On February 25 the man George Bush described as "an unwanted animal at a garden party," Daniel Ortega, will be re-elected President of Nicaragua, and his ruling Sandinista National Liberation Front is likely to win a majority of seats in the new National Assembly in elections that will be supervised by hundreds of international observers. That's not left-wing wishful thinking but a prediction based on a series of opinion polls conducted between October and December 1989, which showed the Sandinistas ahead of their nearest rivals by an average of ten points. More recent polls are wildly contradictory: A survey by the U.S. firm of Greenberg-Lake shows Ortega with a 51-to-24-percent lead, while two January polls by Latin American firms—published in the opposition newspaper *La Prensa*—give Violeta Chamorro of the National Opposition Union (UNO) a 7-to-8-percent lead.

On the face of it a Sandinista victory would seem improbable. The Nicaraguan economy is shot to pieces; in 1988 inflation reached 35,000 percent; workers' wages have fallen 90 percent in real terms since 1981; education and health care—once the shining jewels in the Sandinista crown—are a mess; and infant malnutrition is on the rise. Many in the country, perhaps even a majority, now blame the F.S.L.N. for the economic problems. Nicaragua has had more than ten years of Marxist-inspired revolutionary government and, as in Eastern Europe, plenty of people are fed up and ready for change. In such circumstances what government on earth could hope to be re-elected, except in a fraudulent poll?

But this question ignores an even more compelling reality: The political opposition to the Sandinistas is morally and ideologically bankrupt. Corrupt, bickering and divided, tainted by years of complicity with the *contras* and the Reagan Administration or by feeble passivity, the opposition does not offer a credible alternative to the F.S.L.N., which is why the Sandinistas look set to repeat their 1984 election victory. Of all the problems the opposition has to confront, perhaps the greatest is its disunity. There are now twenty-one legal parties in Nicaragua, plus a few more still trying to get enough signatures to register. The right in Nicaragua does what the left does everywhere else: It divides and fragments until it is reduced to a myriad of tiny factions busily trading insults.

Until March 1979, just before the Sandinistas took power, the Conservatives were united in the National Conservative Alliance. Today the alliance has splintered into

Tony Jenkins is the author of Years of Conflict: Nicaragua Versus the United States *(Franklin Watts).*

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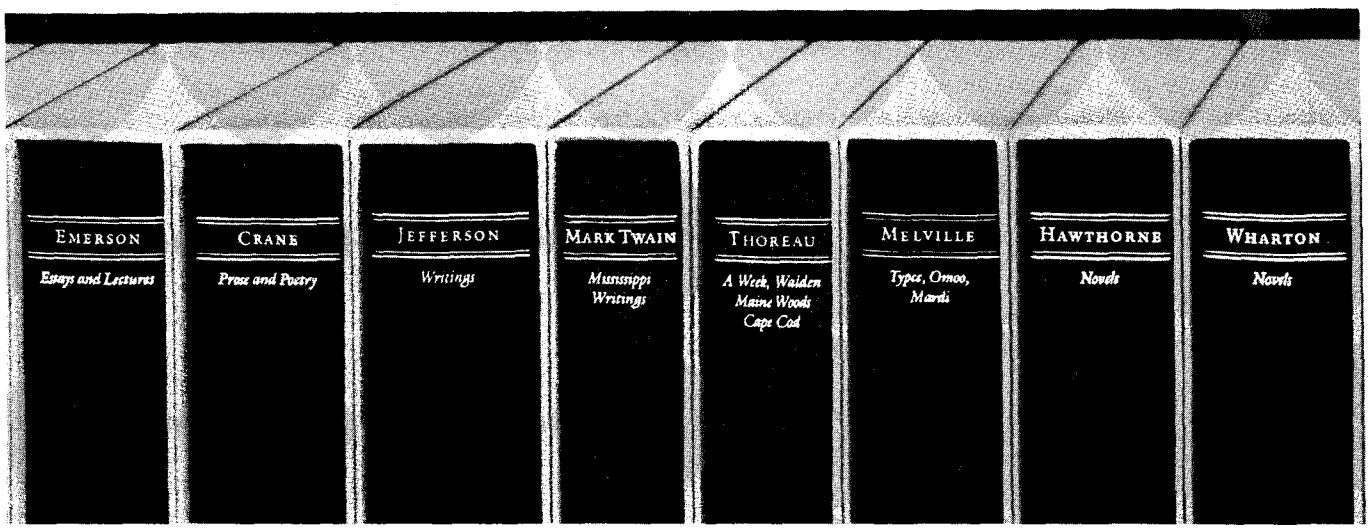

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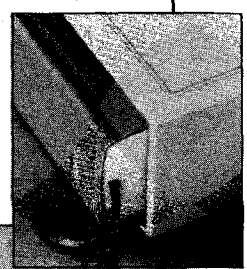

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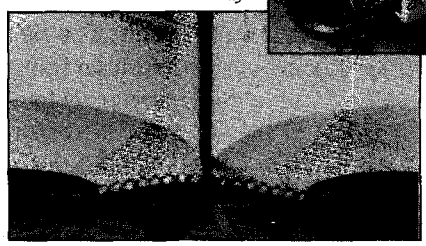

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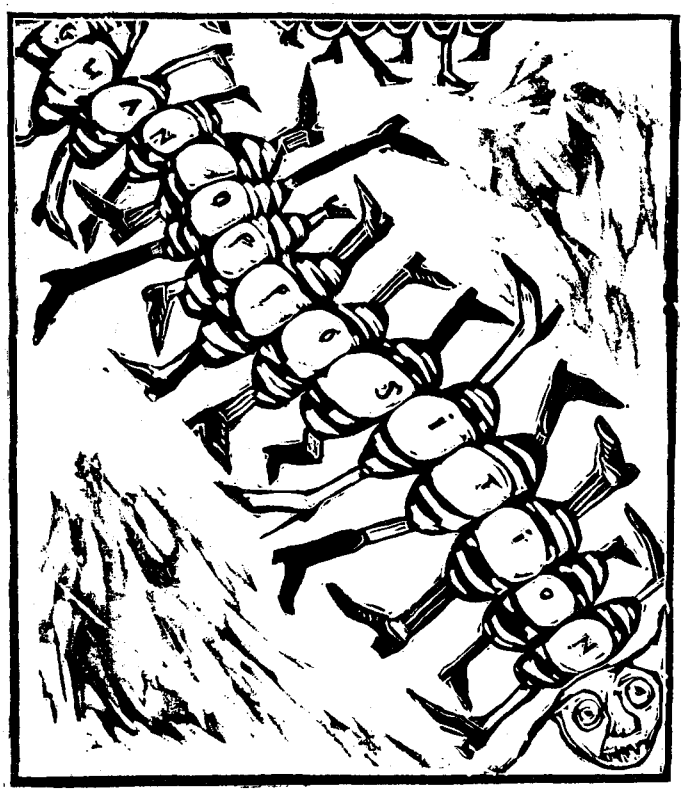
five different Conservative parties, all jostling for the same political space. Worse than the splits themselves has been the public way in which the leaders of the various groups have attacked one another. Almost every break has been accompanied by vitriolic personal insults and by litigation to determine who will control the party assets and keep the party name. Mario Rappaccioli, leader of the National Conservative Party, once commented to me about Miriam Argüello—who had just founded the Popular Conservative Alliance Party—"Poor Miriam, she is not right in the head. I've talked to her doctor; it's because she is so ugly and was never able to find a man who would marry her. . . ." Argüello and Rappaccioli are now supposed to be allies.

The Liberals have also split into four parties—two right-wing holdovers from Somoza's old Nicaraguan Liberal Party, a center-left group close to the F.S.L.N. and the Independent Liberal Party (PLI), which has steadily moved from alliance with the Sandinistas to the right. The Social Christians, too, have split four ways—two groups remain within UNO while two are part of the more moderate center bloc. The Social Democrats are almost paragons of restraint, with just two organizations—but then one of them was a split from the Conservatives in the first place. Profligacy rules on the left, too: There are two communist parties, two Trotskyist parties, a leftist group that fits no labels and a center-left party fighting for Central American union. Enrique Bolaños, a right-wing business leader, says it's simply a matter of ego. "They all want to be able to tell their grandchildren that they were once a presidential candidate. They put personal interests ahead of national ones."

Out of this alphabet soup has emerged UNO, a coalition of eleven parties cobbled together with money and pressure from the U.S. Embassy and blessed with support from *The New York Times*, which describes it as "the only . . . genuinely democratic ticket in the running."



Unfortunately, these "genuine democrats" still have a problem sticking together. The largest party that was to have joined the alliance, the centrist Social Christian Party (P.S.C.), led by Erick Ramírez, pulled out following allegations of misuse of party funds and a bitter argument between Ramírez and fellow party leader Agustín Jarquín (who inevitably created a Social Christian party of his own). The center-left Popular Social Christian Party (P.P.S.C.), a former ally of the Sandinistas and a participant in the 1984 elections, also pulled out of UNO amid rumors that party members were planning to take their leader, Mauricio Díaz, to court for misappropriating donations to the party coffers.

At the same time, again under pressure from the United States, UNO leaders agreed to allow two communist parties to join their alliance to create the impression of a broad national front united in opposition to Sandinista "dictatorship." The communists were eager to join the coalition in the hope that in the event of an UNO victory they would be given Cabinet posts with the power of political patronage, without which they would fast become moribund. The decision to admit the communists upset the most conservative members of the coalition. Meanwhile, some members of the orthodox communist group, the Nicaraguan Socialist Party, rebelled, as one of their leaders, Luís Sánchez, rapidly pushed their organization to the right and formally renounced Marxism-Leninism. Sánchez's father, who had founded the party, was so disgusted that he agreed to stand as a candidate for the F.S.L.N., while other members deserted to other left-wing groups.

The selection of UNO candidates for president and vice president almost tore apart the remainder of the fragile coalition. As Jarquín admitted in an interview, UNO doesn't have any leaders of presidential caliber. Asked who his choice would be, Jarquín suggested Miguel Cardinal Obando y Bravo. The coalition leaders agonized for days and went through ten rounds of voting before bowing to pressure from the U.S. Embassy and choosing Violeta Chamorro to head the ticket, with Virgilio Godoy as her running mate. Gilberto Cuadra, president of Cosep, the private business organization that had led the anti-Sandinista opposition for ten years, was furious, claiming the voting had been fixed. "It is not a winning slate capable of defeating the Sandinistas," he complained.

The UNO ticket proved embarrassing in other ways: Godoy had steadfastly fought Chamorro's selection, stating in an interview that she was "good-for-nothing." Godoy is leader of the PLI and had been Minister of Labor in the first Sandinista Administration, leaving to run as the PLI presidential candidate in the 1984 elections. As Labor Minister he had rammed unwelcome legislation down the throats of the business community and had favored Sandinista unions over locals affiliated with opposition parties. His selection upset the far-right members of UNO, who booed him when the final vote was revealed. Indeed, four parties in the coalition initially refused to accept his nomination. Eventually, after yet another chat with officials at the U.S. Embassy, the par-

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ties withdrew their objections and the Cosep leaders shut up.

Chamorro, meanwhile, was chosen for her symbolic value. She is the widow of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Cardenal, who became a national hero by using his newspaper, *La Prensa*, to campaign against the Somoza dictatorship. Chamorro's assassination in 1978 sparked the first riots that grew into the Sandinista-led revolution. Like Cory Aquino, Doña Violeta, as she is commonly known, carries the appeal of her martyred husband's name, which is why she was invited by the Sandinistas to join the first postrevolutionary junta in 1979.

But Doña Violeta is no politician. Unlike other women on the Nicaraguan political stage, she is clearly out of her depth, referring constantly to her dead husband and to God to explain her actions. "What will you do to revive the economy if you win?" I asked her last year. "God will guide my conscience," she replied. Doña Violeta's most important statements are read from prepared scripts, and her handlers have not yet trusted her enough to let her appear on national television to debate opponents face to face. She also has serious health problems. She suffers from osteoarthritis, and on New Year's Eve she shattered a kneecap in an accident. These problems have forced her to limit her campaign appearances.

To add to this list of woes, Godoy has been accused by members of his own party of stealing thousands of dollars donated to the party by the West German Friedrich Naumann Foundation. The evidence is apparently so compelling that only one member of the 96-strong National Assembly voted against a motion to withdraw Godoy's parliamentary immunity from prosecution. All this may sound like a lot of irrelevant and malicious gossip, but there is little doubt that it is influencing the way people are planning to vote. As one teacher who is fed up with the Sandinistas told me last year, "If UNO [leaders] can't even stop fighting among themselves, how can I have confidence that they will know how to run the country?"

Many people also question what is happening to all the U.S. funds being channeled through the National Endowment for Democracy. In theory Congress has appropriated $9 million to support the opposition. In practice, according to a study by former C.I.A. analyst David MacMichael, the United States has funneled some $26 million to the domestic opposition since 1984 [see MacMichael, "The U.S. Plays the *Contra* Card," February 5]. Nevertheless, more than thirty UNO candidates for municipal and National Assembly elections have withdrawn, and many are complaining about lack of funds. "They are treating it like walking-around money for their personal pleasure," said one Conservative activist.

UNO activists also say that the close links between the coalition and the *contras* have damaged their cause. Among the key figures in UNO are Alfonso Robelo and Alfredo César, both former members of the *contra* directorate. In November César was forced to resign as director of the UNO campaign after it was revealed that he had written to Enrique Bermúdez, then military commander of the *contras*, urging him not to demobilize his troops until after the elec-

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tions. To make matters worse, several UNO candidates in the municipal elections are former members of Somoza's National Guard.

UNO might have been able to surmount its internal divisions if it had a credible program for solving the country's economic problems. But the coalition's platform is full of empty rhetoric that does little to allay fears that, if UNO wins the election, the old elite will roll back Sandinista efforts to close the yawning gap between rich and poor. It is common knowledge that the UNO manifesto is a rewrite of the "Blue and White Plan," a document drafted by Cosep that aimed to strengthen the private sector and compensate private landowners whose farms were redistributed to landless peasants. UNO promises to raise salaries, spend more on welfare and health programs, compensate farmers, reduce the foreign debt and revitalize the economy, but it offers no hard figures. The unspoken assumption is that Washington will reward an UNO victory with generous dollops of aid.

UNO's lack of political skills was amply demonstrated during the invasion of Panama, when its response was slow and incoherent. In the end it amounted to a tepid endorsement of Bush's little war, a reaction that ran against the overwhelmingly negative feeling in Latin America and did little to quiet fears that Nicaragua might be the next target. What really upset many supporters was that UNO never came out with a strong condemnation of the U.S. raid on the Nicaraguan Ambassador's residence in Panama, which outraged Nicaraguans across the political spectrum. After that, according to many observers, the UNO campaign simply fizzled.

Leaders of UNO also have hampered their cause by insisting that the election is not to establish a working multiparty system in which the Sandinistas and the opposition will continue to dispute power. Rather, as Godoy said in an interview, UNO regards the election as "a plebiscite between two systems: Sandinista dictatorship or Western-style democracy." But many are reluctant to make so stark a choice, feeling that some Sandinista achievements are worth preserving. Others fear that endorsing UNO would produce a further round of revolutionary change, and therefore a further round of war.

Finally, UNO might have stood a chance if it were the sole opposition group. But the opposition is not monolithic, and UNO is far from the only credible alternative to the Sandinistas. It has to contend with the Conservative Democratic Party of Nicaragua (P.C.D.N.), which won 14 percent of the vote in the 1984 elections and is one of the best-organized opposition groups. While UNO leaders were living the high life in Costa Rica or Miami, or looking for support in Europe and Washington, the P.C.D.N. got on with the serious business of opening party offices and recruiting members [see Jenkins, "Nicaragua's Disloyal Opposition," April 12, 1986].

UNO also will lose votes to Erick Ramírez's Social Christian Party, which is now backed by Edén Pastora, a one-time Sandinista hero and *contra* leader who has returned to the country. Pastora still commands popular support, and his attacks on UNO have been much fiercer than those on the Sandinistas. He says—and many voters on February 25 may agree with him—that the Sandinistas are evolving toward a Western European style of social democracy while UNO threatens to revert to "Somocista fascism." □

WORDS THAT WOUND

Free Speech for Campus Bigots?

JON WIENER

In a classroom discussion at the University of Michigan last year, a student said he considered homosexuality a disease treatable with therapy. The university summoned him to a disciplinary hearing and charged him with violating the school's new regulations prohibiting speech that "victimizes" an individual on the basis of "sexual orientation." The American Civil Liberties Union took the university to court, and District Court Judge Avern Cohn ruled last September that the new rules violated the First Amendment's free speech guarantee.

The Michigan case typifies the debate now raging among liberals and others on the left as U.S. campuses grapple with a marked rise in slurs and actions that are antigay, anti-woman and racist. The question at the center of the debate is, How do colleges and universities protect free speech and at the same time combat the increase in abusive language by the dominant white male group? Understandably, the victims of such harassment are demanding that their institutions do much more to make campuses what they ought to be: places that are free of discrimination, that foster and celebrate diversity.

The new regulations at the University of Michigan were promulgated in response to such demands after a series of incidents on that campus—including the broadcast of racist jokes on the school radio station—that are just a part of the increase in offensive speech on campuses in the 1980s. I documented this depressing trend in an earlier article [see Wiener, "Racial Hatred on Campus," February 27, 1989], and the evidence continues to accumulate:

§ At the University of Connecticut in December 1987 eight Asian-American students on the way to an off-campus, semiformal dance were harassed for forty-five minutes by a group of "very large football players who were just dying to get us to fight them," one of the victims related. "They spit on us . . . called us 'Oriental faggots' and sang 'we all live in a yellow submarine.'"

§ At Arizona State University in Tempe, in April 1989, a black student, Toby Wright, got into a fight with a white member of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity, Sean Hedgecock, outside the S.A.E. house. Wright maintains

Jon Wiener, a contributing editor of The Nation, *teaches history at the University of California, Irvine.*

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he heard Hedgecock say, "Fuck you, nigger." More than two dozen S.A.E. members came out of their house and surrounded Wright and two other blacks, chanting, "Coon. Nigger. Porchmonkey." The police arrived, broke up the confrontation and later reported that Hedgecock "kept making racial slurs and threats," including a threat to "get those niggers" and "kill them." Hedgecock denies the charge. Later the same night, around 1 A.M., two other black students on fraternity row were confronted by Hedgecock, who shouted, "Those are the niggers! They're back!" A mob of 2,000 poured out of fraternity-house parties and surrounded the two blacks as ten to fifteen fraternity men beat them. Within four minutes the police arrived again, sprayed Mace to clear the street and took the two blacks into custody in handcuffs, later releasing them.

Putting up with offensive speech is a price its targets must accept for the privilege of living in a free society. Many white males try to dismiss these kinds of abusive behavior as harmless frivolity. White students at the University of Connecticut told their Asian-American classmates that their harassers were "just drunk, trying to have some fun." The police chief at Arizona State denied the mob attack on blacks was racially motivated; he called it a "fight" caused by "hot weather."

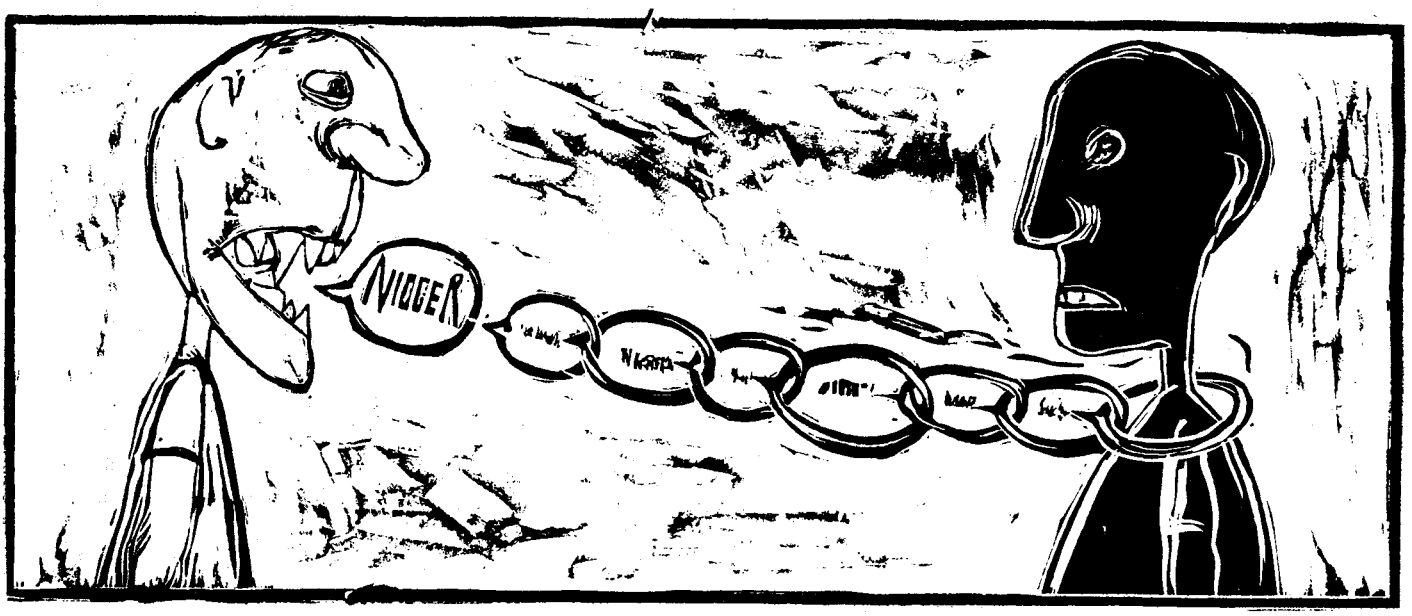
These latter views suggest that white people often don't understand that racist speech hurts. "We have not listened to the real victims," Stanford Law School professor Charles Lawrence told a recent A.C.L.U. conference. Richard Delgado of the University of Wisconsin Law School refers to "words that wound"—speech that interferes with the abused students' ability to study and learn, undermines their self-respect and leads to feelings of defensiveness, anger, shame, helplessness, and to a withdrawal from campus activities.

The United States is virtually alone in the world in providing governmental protection for racist hate speech, writes Mari Matsuda, a professor at Stanford Law School, in the August 1989 issue of *Michigan Law Review*. Britain's Race Relations Act of 1976 criminalized incitement to discrimination and incitement to racial hatred, including "threatening, abusive, or insulting" written matter or public speech. Canada has outlawed inciting hatred against a group when a breach of peace is likely to follow. Australia and New Zealand also have legal restrictions on racist speech. Countries outside the common-law tradition have similar laws: In Sweden "agitation against ethnic groups" is a crime defined as "contempt . . . with allusion to race, skin color, national or ethnic origin or religious creed." If all these countries are trying to protect minorities from offensive speech, why can't the United States?

Even First Amendment absolutists recognize some limits on freedom of speech. The law protects people against defamation and libel, Matsuda writes, because lawyers and lawmakers "understand the way false speech damages their standing in the community and limits their opportunities, their self-worth, their free enjoyment of life. . . . To see this and yet fail to see that the very same things happen to the victims of racist speech is selective vision." It won't be easy to design protections against offensive speech on campus, but Matsuda makes a strong case that we must try, because such speech does "real harm to real people" who deserve protection and redress.

Two different approaches to prohibiting offensive speech and harassment, one broad and one narrow, are currently being debated at colleges and universities. The first prohibits students from engaging in a wide variety of abusive behavior. At the University of Connecticut, for instance, students may now be punished for the use of "derogatory names, inappropriately directed laughter, inconsiderate jokes, and conspicuous exclusion [of another student] from conversation." At the University of Pennsylvania students may be punished for using any language that "stigmatizes or victimizes individuals" and "creates an intimidating or offensive environment."

The University of Michigan policy that was struck down by Judge Cohn was one of the broadest. Established in



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1988, it prohibited "any behavior, verbal or physical, that stigmatizes or victimizes an individual on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, creed, national orientation, ancestry, age, marital status, handicap or Vietnam-era veteran status." Prohibited speech included that which "has the purpose or . . . effect of interfering with an individual's academic efforts." A handbook titled "What Students Should Know about Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment" included examples of conduct that would be punished. One of them read, "A male student makes remarks in class like 'Women just aren't as good in this field as men,' thus creating a hostile learning atmosphere for female classmates." The judge examined university records of enforcement of the policy and found three cases in which "students were disciplined or threatened with discipline for comments made in the classroom setting."

Judge Cohn did not declare that all offensive speech is protected by the First Amendment. "What the University could not do," he ruled, was "establish an anti-discrimination policy that had the effect of prohibiting certain speech because it disagreed with ideas or messages. . . . Nor could the University proscribe speech simply because it was found to be offensive, even gravely so, by large numbers of people."

The broad policies have been the target of fierce criticism by civil libertarians. Although the regulations limiting racist speech on campus are designed primarily to protect blacks, the victims of these ordinances probably will *be* blacks, argues Ira Glasser, national executive director of the A.C.L.U. "Louis Farrakhan is likely to be the first," Glasser says, because the leader of the Nation of Islam calls Judaism a "gutter religion." That means his speech could be banned under the broad rules because it is abusive and stigmatizes people because of their religion in a way associated with past discrimination—the kind that led to the Holocaust.

The narrow approach seeks to deal with the concerns of the civil libertarians by permitting all public speech and prohibiting only the most threatening and inflammatory cases of face-to-face abusive speech: direct, intentional, verbal assaults, personal confrontations where angry or hateful epithets are hurled at particular students. Some legal scholars argue that prohibiting this kind of speech is allowable under the "fighting words" doctrine, created by the Supreme Court in the case of *Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire.* In that 1942 ruling, the Court declared that it is permissible to ban words that "by their very utterance inflict injury or tend to incite an immediate breach of the peace." The University of Wisconsin, Pennsylvania State University and the nine-campus University of California system have adopted the narrow policy, prohibiting only fighting words and allowing all other expressions of offensive speech.

The narrow regulations are frustrating to student targets of abusive attacks, who turn to their school administrators for help in coping with racial harassment. Under the narrow rules, Wisconsin cannot punish a fraternity that held a mock "slave auction," with pledges in blackface, because the fraternity members did not directly confront blacks. Nor could Michigan punish the campus disc jockey who broadcast racist jokes.

The "fighting words" standard adopted by the Supreme Court may provide a legal basis for criminalizing abusive speech, but civil libertarians do not accept the doctrine. In *Chaplinsky* a Jehovah's Witness had been distributing religious literature on a street corner in Rochester, New Hampshire; he told a police officer, "You are a God damned racketeer" and "a damned Fascist and the whole government of Rochester are Fascists or agents of Fascists." He was arrested and convicted for making these statements, and the Supreme Court upheld his conviction, declaring that he had uttered "fighting words."

Civil libertarians feel that *Chaplinsky* was wrongly decided, arguing that it should not be a crime to call a cop a fascist. They also point out that the courts seem to be employing the "fighting words" test quite selectively. For example, a notorious invocation occurred last fall, when Chief Justice William Rehnquist cited the doctrine as a justification for banning flag burning. Thus the doctrine has been invoked by the Court to protect cops and to prosecute flag burners, but not to protect gays, women and minorities from cruel speech and harassment.

Some critics, including Matsuda, also object to the "fighting words" doctrine because it provides a male-centered standard: Insults can be prohibited when they provoke violence by men. Such a doctrine could define some racist, sexist or homophobic insults as non-actionable, Matsuda argues, because the victims did not respond with violence. Women especially do not respond to verbal abuse with physical counterattacks; instead, she says, they try to avoid situations where they are abused and internalize the damage.

The A.C.L.U. is opposed to both the broad and narrow rules. "We're against every version of campus restrictions on racist speech we've seen," says Glasser. "We think they are all unconstitutional. . . . Freedom of speech is being made the scapegoat for problems the people in power don't know how to solve." Glasser objects especially to the way the University of California's "fighting words" regulation distinguishes between words that express an idea, which are protected, and words that "simply injure and intimidate," which are prohibited. Who, Glasser asks, is going to decide which words don't express an idea and thus can be banned?

"We live in a racist society," Glasser insists, "which is why you can't trust the people in power to make distinctions about which speech should be permitted. We just got through eight years of a national government that believed affirmative action was reverse discrimination against whites. We have a Supreme Court that basically endorsed that view. Ours is still a white society defending its historical racism. We can't control how they will interpret these rules. No one should have any confidence in our law-enforcement apparatus. To rely on the Supreme Court and the dominant political majority to make good decisions about restricting speech is to live in a dream world."

More A.C.L.U. litigation is planned. The University of California "fighting words" policy is "probably a violation of the First Amendment," says Ramona Ripston, executive director of the A.C.L.U. of southern California. "I would

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like to see the A.C.L.U. come up with a policy that protects students from some kinds of harassing speech. After all, we believe the workplace should be free of sexual harassment. We don't see banning explicitly sexual posters in the workplace as a violation of the First Amendment. But unless the University of California can answer the questions we've raised, we will go to court to challenge the constitutionality of the present regulations. Still, I would like to find a way of crafting policy that would get at some racist speech without impinging on the First Amendment."

Thomas Grey, a constitutional law expert at the Stanford Law School and a civil libertarian, has written a proposed set of narrow guidelines that are regarded by minority advocates as the most thoughtful in meeting the A.C.L.U.'s objections and in identifying "the point at which protected free expression ends and prohibited discriminatory harassment begins." Under his proposed regulations, a university's commitment to free expression requires that "students tolerate even expression of opinions which they find abhorrent." But Grey acknowledges that such a commitment collides with another equally important principle, the university's efforts to achieve equal opportunity, which also has a constitutional basis: the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee of equal protection under the law.

Under Grey's proposed regulations, drafted in October 1989, speech constitutes harassment when it satisfies three criteria: (1) It must be "intended to insult or stigmatize an individual . . . on the basis of their sex, race, color, handicap, religion, sexual orientation, or national and ethnic origin." Political fighting words – calling a cop a fascist – are not actionable; this rule thus represents a narrowing of the Supreme Court's "fighting words" standard. (2) The insult must be "addressed directly to the individual"; there are no penalties for racist statements made to public audiences in lectures, in the student newspaper or on the radio station, or for abusive remarks made, for example, among an all-white fraternity group when the targets of the slurs are not present. (3) The insult must "make use of 'fighting' words or non-verbal symbols," those "commonly understood to convey direct and visceral hatred or contempt." Thus speech can be prohibited when it is "about individuals, directed to those individuals, and expressed in viscerally offensive form."

Inevitably, each criterion raises questions. The requirement of intentionality, for example, would allow the white fraternity boys at Arizona State who used the epithet "nigger" to defend themselves by arguing, "We were just kidding. Can't you take a joke?" The requirement that fighting words must be used in order for the offense to be punishable leaves unpunished extreme expressions of racial hatred that, in the judgment of disciplinary officials, do not meet the criterion because expressions of opinion are and ought to be protected by the First Amendment. Moreover, the fighting words are not identified in Grey's proposed regulations. He is confident, however, that everyone knows what they are: "'Black son of a bitch' won't do it," Grey said in an interview; "'Nigger' will." Legal thinkers pride themselves on the law's ability to make distinctions, but a black undergraduate is

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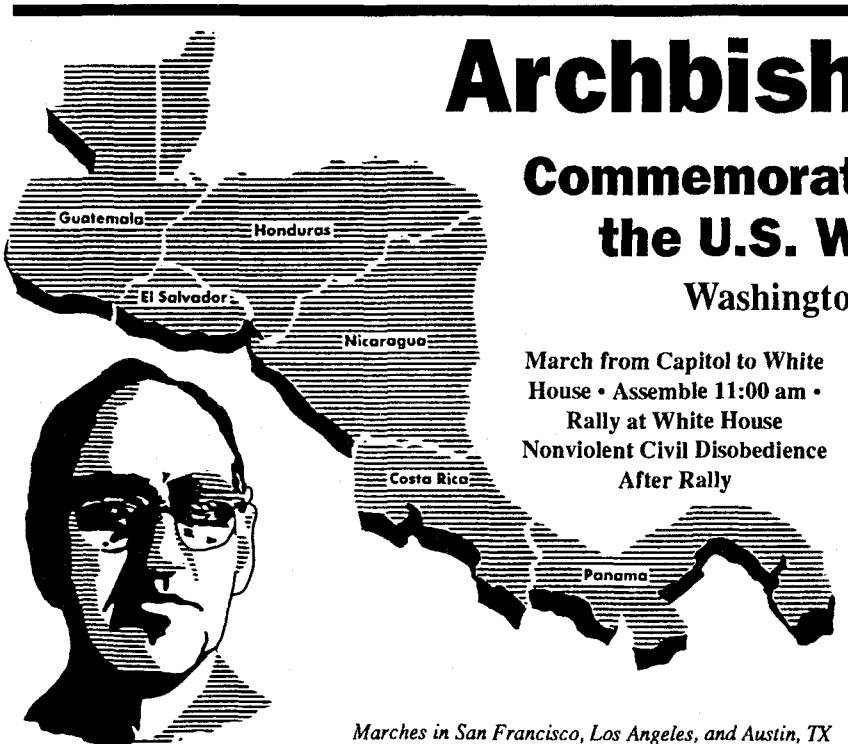

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unlikely to see much difference in this one. Therefore, any set of regulations must be specific about the prohibited speech.

Grey staunchly defends his proposed regulations against the First Amendment absolutist position. "Do you really think someone ought to be able to go up to a black person, call him a nigger to his face and not have that be a breach of the peace? Do you want our universities to tell black students that kind of behavior should be protected? That's not sensible." Racist public speech may well be even more damaging to minority students than private insults. But, says Grey, the "other side of the balance cuts in at this point. Speech directed at the public should be protected."

Although the A.C.L.U. plans to continue to fight restrictions on abusive speech, that doesn't mean the organization thinks the phenomenon should be ignored. "We are very unhappy at the way all concern for the problem of race relations on campus has been channeled into this debate about curbing speech," Glasser says. "[White] kids on campus today grew up at a time when our leadership made it fashionable to be racist. Suddenly they are 18 years old, living in dorms with blacks, and we expect them to speak to their black classmates across a cultural chasm not of their making. It's appalling that universities, of all places, are restricting speech when they should be teaching kids of different races how to talk to each other."

On this point, most people on the left agree. Prohibiting fighting words, Stanford's Grey concedes, "absolutely does not deal with campus racism in a significant way. You're never going to be able to do that with discipline. These rules are like bias-crime statutes, which treat racially motivated crimes as separate, more serious offenses. These rules provide an effective way of saying we take this seriously. They are symbolic, and that's important." How to provide that protection without setting dangerous precedents is a subject that has only begun to be explored. Meanwhile, offensive speech continues to isolate and wound its victims. Minority students deserve protection from such attacks.

But whatever the short-term solution to the problem of words that wound—and let's hope that a creative solution will yield a sanctuary for both free speech and human dignity—the critical need is for a long-term commitment by the universities to extirpating students' racist behavior.

The rise of campus racism and other abusive behavior in the Reagan years indicates that white students need to be educated. This ought to be possible at institutions dedicated to education. Courses on the history of race relations in America should be added to the requirements for graduation (they already have been at some universities); orientation programs for incoming students must address the issue of cultural diversity on campus explicitly and frankly; more minority faculty must be hired, which means more minority students must be attracted to Ph.D. programs. Minority advocates and civil libertarians agree that these are the real weapons for fighting racist speech on campus. □

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Socialism

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

lation by Karl Marx in the nineteenth century.

The breakaways occurred in weak and relatively underdeveloped parts of the global capitalist system and consequently were never able to compete on equal terms with the stronger and more developed parts of the system. From the very beginning, therefore, they had to devote all their energies to the most elementary tasks of survival against the determined efforts of the capitalist leaders to bring them back into the fold. Under such circumstances, these societies were unable to construct a coherent socialist system comparable to the global capitalist system from which they had broken away. Their individual trajectories reflected not only their socialist ambitions but also their varying histories and the special weaknesses with which they were burdened from the outset.

Against this background, the cold war, which in reality included numerous hot wars, takes on its real meaning. It started immediately after World War II when the United States, clearly hegemonic in the global system and in sole possession of nuclear weapons, set about in earnest to reverse the defections from capitalism that were still in the process of happening at the time. With the Red Army in possession of most of Eastern Europe, Stalin at first thought it would be possible to come to a live-and-let-live arrangement with the West, at least in Europe. But after a year or so of acting on this assumption without the slightest sign of U.S. acceptance, he decided that survival demanded the most extreme measures. He imposed rigid Communist dictatorships on the neighboring countries and grouped them together in a tight military alliance capable of rapidly occupying the entire European continent in case of a U.S. atomic attack on the U.S.S.R. This, and not imperialist expansion to the West, always had been the purpose of the Warsaw Pact, and it explains why Gorbachev could afford to treat the postwar military arrangements in Eastern Europe as expendable after the Soviet Union finally had achieved nuclear parity.

Stalin's strategy worked. With the atomic option foreclosed, the United States turned to a new strategy: subjecting the Soviet Union and its Communist allies to the unbearable strains of an unlimited arms race. This worked too, and 1989 turned out to be the year in which it bore fruit.

Soviet society (especially—but by no means only—the economy) entered a crisis during the Brezhnev period. Gor-

Paul M. Sweezy is co-editor of Monthly Review.

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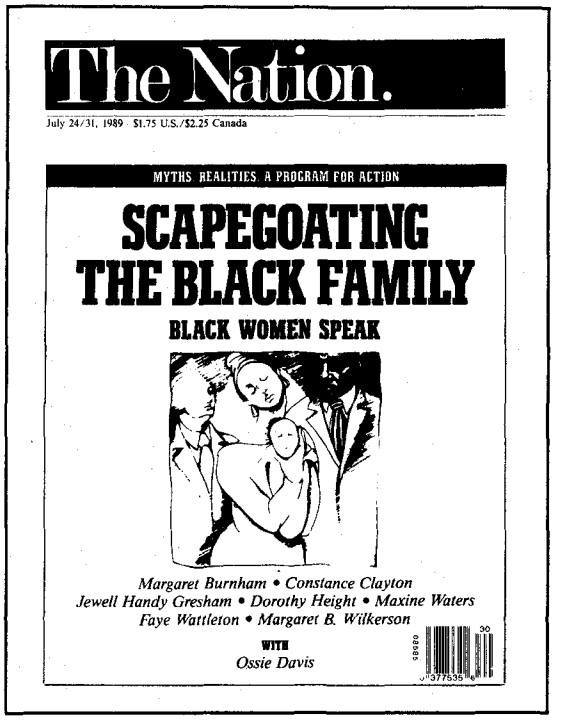
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bachev, a privileged product of the system, saw the need for basic reforms to save it. This meant not only *perestroika* and *glasnost* but also ending the lethal arms race and abandoning the costly commitment to maintain Communist dictatorships in neighboring countries. Absent the assurance of Soviet military support, these regimes, which had never enjoyed widespread popular support, collapsed.

So 1989 surely will be remembered as the year the cold war ended, at least that version of it that took over in Europe in 1945. What else will it be remembered for? A major turning point in the history of capitalism? The end of socialism? A few words in conclusion on these crucially important but still largely unsettled questions.

I seriously doubt that 1989 represents a major turning point for capitalism. Eastern Europe clearly is reverting to its status between the wars as a sort of protectorate and dependency of Western and Central European capital. This is of course an important development, and it could produce interesting and instructive results. Parts of the region seem likely to be "Latin Americanized," while others (East Germany and Czechoslovakia) may succeed in achieving a more Austrian-like integration into the European capitalist subsystem. But in the larger picture these are minor changes unlikely to have significant repercussions outside the region itself. As far as the global capitalist system is concerned, its internal contradictions will hardly be affected one way or another. As any attentive observer of the world scene knows, these contradictions, as in the past, continue to multiply and intensify, with all indications pointing to the maturing of one or more serious crises in the not-distant future.

Finally, there is the question of the future of socialism. This needs to be broken down into two parts—one relating to the short-to-medium run, the other to the medium-to-long run.

For what is sometimes, though not very accurately, called the foreseeable future, the fate of socialism seems to depend largely on what happens in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev, representing the reform faction of the Soviet elite, says his aim is to rescue socialism, not to bury it. This is not unimportant but much more important is whether the great mass of the Soviet people, especially the working class, shares this aim and will resist what are evidently strong tendencies in Soviet society either to revert to the status quo ante or to follow Eastern Europe in taking the capitalist road. If such resistance is forthcoming, my sense is that there is a chance of a socialist revival in the Soviet Union. But we will probably not know the answer for quite a while yet, and in the meantime it seems prudent to reserve judgment.

As to the medium-to-long run, I am convinced that socialism has exactly the same chance of surviving and realizing its potential as does the human species. Capitalism is ruining the human habitat and will continue to do so as long as it exists. In another century or so, maybe less, we will be beyond the point of no return. Obviously socialism would be no guarantee of salvation. But if socialism means the use of human intelligence to satisfy human needs—as Marx thought it would—then there is just as obviously no other possibility of salvation. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Finding a Voice in Exile

GAYLE FELDMAN

During the past decade, about 70,000 intellectuals and their families from the People's Republic of China have come to the United States and stayed. The dilemma that currently confronts the writers, journalists, critics and political thinkers among them is neither new nor uniquely Chinese: How can they carry on intellectually, creatively and politically when they can't go home again and when the language they speak and read and write, through which they define their lives, is not that of their newfound land?

Since the military and political crackdown last June, which forced those who could to flee abroad and those already living overseas to abandon any ideas of a quick return, the Chinese literati have experienced both an overriding need to see their thoughts in print and a profound linguistic disfranchisement. Like wave after wave of intellectual refugees before them, in response they have tried to start magazines and newspapers in their native language to take the place of those they left behind.

I will focus primarily on the efforts of one group of P.R.C. intellectuals who are hoping to launch a literary journal in the United States, although other Chinese magazines and magazine attempts will be mentioned. The search for a voice in exile is nothing new in itself, but each attempt casts light on characteristics of intellectual life that are specific to the group in question. The Chinese exiles' quest to find a publishing identity overseas is no exception.

The backgrounds and ages of the intellectuals involved in these projects vary greatly; they range from those in their early 20s to mature scholars and writers in their 50s who left behind well-established careers. Immediately after the Gate of Heavenly Peace slammed shut on June 4, the intellectuals living in the United States who had previously planned to return to their homeland, as well as the democracy movement activists who went abroad fleeing persecution, hoped that they would be able to go back to China in a year or less. They now have to come to terms with a separation that more likely will last three to five years or even longer.

For some, the course of day-to-day life is determined by American university and foundation grants, by money from Hong Kong and Taiwan (the latter often going through "laundering" processes, for obvious reasons) and by help from the Chinese-American community. Others have plunged into the economic life of the United States and manage very well on their own. But old and new arrivals alike feel an almost desperate need for regular injections of intellectual nourishment from their own culture.

The craving is relieved in part through already established channels for literature, critical thinking and political discourse, such as the *Chinese Intellectual* magazine, which has been funded by the National Endowment for Democracy [see John Spicer Nichols, page 266]. This quarterly started in the mid-1980s and has been edited from New York by Liang Heng, known for his Cultural Revolution memoir, *Son of the Revolution* (1983). However, the *Chinese Intellectual* has aimed primarily to influence a highly selective mailing list within the P.R.C., and for that and other reasons, the magazine decided to move its editorial and distribution base to China at the end of 1988. But like so many best-laid plans, this one was quashed by the events of last June. Because of his connections with the magazine, its Beijing-based editor, Liang Congjie, was accused of being involved with the C.I.A., and publication had to resume out of New York.

During the past decade, at least five other literary organs have been started by Chinese intellectuals in the United States; most have labored under great financial and distribution constraints. Further complicating the situation, especially prior to June 4, was many intellectuals' disinclination to court retribution at home by criticizing the government while abroad. This led them to eschew involvement in the more overtly dissident political magazines like *China Spring*.

Factionalism, endemic to the Chinese intellectual world, has also splintered both the creative sources and the readership for existing publications. Therefore, on the more popular front, although the *World Journal* and *Center Daily News*, Taiwan-oriented Chinese-language newspapers published in New York, have had literary sections for some time, they have not been the periodicals of choice for readers from the P.R.C.

Instead, the principal forum for writing coming out of the mainland and for P.R.C. authors resident in the United States has been the cultural section of *China Daily News*, whose Taiwan-educated editor, Wang Yu, is well known and trusted in P.R.C. literary circles. Indeed, when the political winds blew chill at various times during the 1980s, and "antispiritual pollution" and "antibourgeois liberalization" campaigns made it impossible for some Beijing and Shanghai writers to be published at home, she provided a pseudonymous publication lifeline for them in the United States.

In the spring of 1987, Wang and a small group of P.R.C. intellectuals based mainly at Columbia University founded the Morningside Society, paralleling the literary and artistic salons that were springing up in Beijing. Members of the society published their stories and essays in *China Daily News*, but the intellectual symbiosis between the émigrés and their homeland was such that beginning in January 1988, selections from their writing also occupied a regular bimonthly slot in a popular Shanghai literary magazine, *Fiction World*. In addition, the short stories and novellas of a Beijing-born Columbia student and Morningside co-founder, Zha Jianying, were increasingly being sought by the most prestigious literary magazines on the mainland.

In the summer of 1987, Zha returned to China. The previous year, a friend of the Morningside founders, Su Wei, had gone back to Beijing after studying in the United States. Su became a researcher at the Literature Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). In the summer of 1988, Zha joined forces with several leading Beijing literary critics, such as Liu Zaifu and Li Tuo; with the Chinese literature expert and visiting American professor Perry Link; and with Su, to found the *Eastern Record*, the kind of wide-ranging, thought-provoking literary journal that the Morningside members in New York and the literati in Beijing had long been dreaming about. Although the *Record* was not the kind of *samizdat* publication that is familiar from Eastern Europe (there is no real tra-

Gayle Feldman is trade news editor of Publishers Weekly *and has worked in publishing houses in Beijing and Shanghai. She is a frequent visitor to China.*

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dition of *samizdat* publishing in China), the magazine's first three issues, published during the early months of 1989, generated a lot of excitement in academic and literary circles in Beijing.

But then, of course, spring blossomed in a way that no Chinese intellectual on either side of the Pacific could have foretold. Members of the Literature Institute, including Su, were active in organizing petitions. Back in New York members of the Morningside Society became caught up with the events swirling through their homeland. But on June 4 the world of the Beijing literati and their Morningside counterparts was turned upside down.

In New York the editors of *China Daily News* refused to toe the party line in their reporting and commentary. The P.R.C. pulled out the funding plug and the paper folded overnight. (It has recently been restarted as a weekly party mouthpiece without benefit of Wang Yu's literary section or the services of many of its previous editors.) The *Eastern Record* was closed down and its editorial board came under heavy scrutiny. Li Tuo and Liu Zaifu, who had been asked by University of Chicago literature professor Leo Lee to participate in a research project, made their way to Chicago. The writer Zha Jianying decided it was time to come back to New York. Su was rewarded for his prominence in organizing petitions by being placed on the Chinese government's "most wanted" list, and he had to flee his homeland in company with student leader Wuer Kaixi and Yan Jiaqi, the CASS political adviser to deposed Party Secretary Zhao Ziyang; he found his way to Chicago and eventually to Princeton, where he was invited to study by his *Eastern Record* colleague Perry Link.

Having lost their primary publication outlets in both Beijing and New York, these intellectuals felt a greater yearning than ever to express themselves in print. Coming at the same dilemma from different angles, the Morningside members and the intellectuals based in Chicago began to ponder whether they could start something like an *Eastern Record* on this side of the Pacific.

As Morningside co-founder Tang Yiming, a Columbia Ph.D. candidate, puts it, "We felt there was a clear need for a broad-based magazine that would keep the spirit of new literature and independent thinking alive. Chinese people have a great need to re-evaluate their own culture, and to be educated in the rudiments of democracy, neither of which is easy. The intellectuals who have come from China and can't at present return may nevertheless exercise a strong influence on Chinese culture in the future, and they need a chance to circulate and debate their thoughts while here." At the end of September the Morningside members drafted a magazine proposal which was then taken up by some of the Chicago-based intellectuals as well.

Sketching a magazine in draft, though, is rather different from having the wherewithal to see it realized in print. For one thing, there is the question of funding. Who will pay the seed costs for a bimonthly magazine whose readership base will necessarily be limited to those literate in Chinese, and which cannot pay for itself through subscriptions alone? Then there is the obstacle of inexperience. Knowing how to negotiate censorship and other hazards of the Beijing publishing labyrinth does not prepare one for the very different exigencies of publishing in America. Beyond those questions is the matter of who will do the work. Can Chinese intellectuals, who fall into factions at the slightest provocation, stop splitting political hairs and work together?

At first the Morningside group thought the obstacles could be overcome quickly, and they envisaged launching their magazine, which they dubbed the *China Cultural Forum*, early this year. Soon enough, though, they found that certain funding sources had too many political strings attached. Some writers and critics would refuse to participate in a magazine if it were supported financially by overtly political organizations, let alone by any money from Taiwan. Indeed, even some highly political magazine projects that have openly courted Taiwanese assistance have not met with any great funding success.

In addition, through discussions with American scholars, the exiles came to appreciate the practical considerations involved in getting a publication off the ground in the United States. They were also encouraged to see the advantages in opening their forum to a wider audience that might include Chinese-Americans and others, as well as Chinese living in Hong Kong and Singapore.

Currently, members of the group are looking for funding, soliciting articles and encouraging writers whose exile has numbed them into inaction to start producing again. The hope is that the first issue of *China Cultural Forum* will be launched to coincide with the June 4 anniversary, but a great deal will have to

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be accomplished in the space of a few months for that intention to be realized. Recently, a Taiwanese publishing house expressed an interest in publishing Morningside members' fiction in book form, so one way or another they are hoping to see themselves in print.

Among the other publication projects of Chinese intellectuals living abroad is that of Chen Ruoxi and the P.R.C. novelist Dai Houying, currently based in the United States. Reportedly, they obtained money from Taiwanese sources to start a literary quarterly, which they have called *The Square* (as in Tiananmen). Confusingly, another journal which has sometimes been referred to by the same title, but has also been called *Dawn* in the Chinese press, a magazine with an almost entirely political bent, is being planned by the Confederation for Chinese Democracy leaders Su Xiaokang, Yuan Zhiming and others in Paris. A highly politicized four-page tabloid, the *Press Freedom Herald*, has recently been started by a group of Chinese journalists in California, who publish it three times each month. In Oslo, China's best-known contemporary poet, Bei Dao, is trying to resurrect the journal *Today*, which was the most famous publication of the 1978-79 Democracy Wall era. And the P.R.C.'s revered investigative journalist Liu Binyan, who has spent the past two years as a visiting scholar in America, reportedly has also entertained thoughts of a journal start-up.

Many different Chinese are searching, as other groups have done before them, for a voice to see them through their time as strangers in this strange new land, a voice that will nurture the unaccustomed habit of free expression and vent both their literary and democratic yearnings. Some of their projects, inevitably, won't make it off the ground; others will get off to a precarious start and founder in midair. But one or two may manage to take flight and eventually, perhaps, enrich the mainstream culture as well. □

The Styxties

JOHN LEONARD

VINELAND. *By Thomas Pynchon. Little, Brown. 385 pp. $19.95.*

Vineland—a multimedia semi-thriller, a *Star Wars* for the counterculture—is easier to read than anything else by Thomas Pynchon except *The Crying of Lot 49*. Like *Crying*, it's a brief for the disinherited and dispossessed, the outlaws and outcasts of an underground America. Also like *Crying*, I suspect it's a breather between biggies. It doesn't feel like something obsessed-about and fine-tuned for the seventeen years since *Gravity's Rainbow*. It feels unbuttoned, as though the author-god had gone to a ballgame; another, darker, magisterial mystification is implied, maybe the rumored Mason-Dixon opus. This doesn't make *Vineland* a Sunday in the Park with George, but at least it can be summarized without my sounding too much like an idiot.

Where is "Vineland"?

In northern California's redwoods, "a Harbor of Refuge" since the middle of the nineteenth century "to Vessels that may have suffered on their way North from the strong headwinds that prevail along this coast." It's also a republic of metaphors, a theme park of sixties obsessions—television, mysticism, revolution, rock and roll, Vietnam, drugs, paranoia and repression. And it refers as well to the Vinland of the old Norse sagas, what the Vikings called America. (I wasted time looking up the Vikings. How far did their dragonships get? Explain that Viking tower in Newport, Rhode Island, and those Minnesota runes. Was Quetzalcoatl actually a Viking? Is Pynchon singing some rock saga about another of his unmapped kingdoms, like Vheissu, the "dream of annihilation" at the heart of *V*?) Anyway, it's symbolic: a Third World.

What happens to whom, and when, in this "Vineland"?

In Orwellian 1984, midway through the Reagan gerontocracy, refugees from the sixties are having a hard time. Zoyd Wheeler, who used to deal dope and play keyboard in a rock band, is a "gypsy roofer" trying to take care of his teenage daughter, Prairie. Prairie's in love with a heavy metal neofascist and misses the mother she hasn't seen since babyhood. This mother, the almost mythical Frenesi, belonged in the sixties to a band of guerrilla moviemakers, the Death to the Pig Nihilist Film Kollective, but she was more or less abducted by the malign federal prosecutor Brock Vond and "turned" into an "independent contractor" for F.B.I. sting operations. When Justice De-

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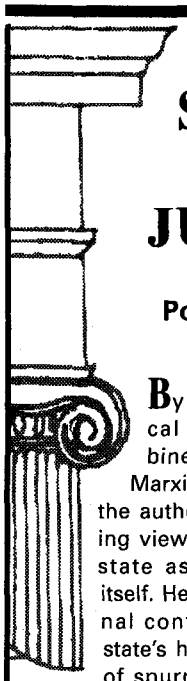

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partment budget cuts "disappear" Frenesi from the government computer, Vond is frantic. Expecting her to show up in Vineland, he plots to frame Zoyd, kidnap Prairie and scorch every pot plantation north of "San Narcisco." (Think of Panama.)

In other words, "the State law-enforcement apparatus . . . calling itself 'America' " declares total war on the leftover flower children. It's a made-for-TV rerun. Back in the sixties Vond's feds destroyed a college-campus People's Republic of Rock and Roll and trucked the student revolutionaries off to camps for a Political Re-Education Program (PREP). This is where he turned Frenesi. When Vond invades Vineland, Zoyd and Prairie are assisted in their resistance by the woman warrior DL Chastain; by the Japanese private eye Takeshi; by the D.E.A. renegade and television addict Hector Zuniga; by the Sisterhood of Kunoichi Attentives, a convent of Ninjettes in the karmic adjustment racket; by Vato and Blood, who steal cars and traffic with ghosts; by punk rockers, Jesus bikers, Mafia hoods and three generations of Left Coast Wobblies, including Frenesi's mother, Sasha, who may or may not be a member of the Party.

Is any of this funny?

Of course it's funny. Not only does Pynchon know more than we do about almost everything—communications theory, stimulus-response psychology, rocket science, Catatonic Expressionism, entropy, gauchos and stamps—but what he doesn't know, he makes up. In *Vineland*, for instance, ping-ponging between the sixties and the eighties, he makes up TV movies: John Ritter in *The Bryant Gumbel Story*, Pee-wee Herman in *The Robert Musil Story*, Woody Allen in *Young Kissinger*. Not to mention a docudrama about the Boston Celtics with Paul McCartney as Kevin McHale and Sean Penn as Larry Bird. And not even to think about *The Chipmunks Sing Marvin Hamlisch*.

There are, besides, the Bodhi Dharma Pizza Temple, "a classic example of the California pizza concept at its most misguided," and a controlled-environment mall called the Noir Center, with an upscale mineral-water boutique (Bubble Indemnity), a perfume and cosmetics shop (The Mall Tease Flacon) and a New York deli (The Lady 'n' the Lox).

Of all the funny names—Weed Atman, Ditzah and Zipi Pisk, Ortho Bob, Mirage—my favorite is Isaiah Two Four, Prairie's heavy metal boyfriend, named by his parents for the swords-into-plowshares, spears-into-pruning-hooks passage from the Bible. No wonder Isaiah wants to start a chain of Violence Centers, each to include "automatic-weapon firing ranges, paramilitary fantasy adventures . . . and video game rooms for the kids." These centers would presumably compete with the "fantasy marathons" of the Kunoichi Sisterhood that feature "group rates on Kiddie Ninja weekends." I also laughed at a Sisterhood self-criticism session devoted to "scullery duty as a decoding of individual patterns of not-eating." And of the many songs Pynchon's written for his various musicians, the funniest is "Just a floo-zy with-an U-u-zi."

Can we count on the usual entropy, paranoia and Manicheism?

Yes, as well as some terrific rhapsodies on water, cars and parrots. And the paranoids are right. *They* (narcs, RICOs, yuppies, television anchorfaces, earth-rapers, treekillers, random urine-sniffers, sexhating deathloving Wasteland thought police) are out to get *us* (whomever: civil liberties, due process, readers of Pynchon and *The Nation*). *And* they use us against us. At PREP,

> Brock Vond's genius was to have seen in the activities of the sixties left not threats to order but unacknowledged desires for it. While the Tube was proclaiming youth revolution against parents of all kinds and most viewers were accepting this story, Brock saw the deep—if he'd allowed himself to feel it, the sometimes touching—need to stay children forever, safe inside some extended national Family. . . . They'd only been listening to the wrong music, breathing the wrong smoke, admiring the wrong personalities. They needed some reconditioning. . . . the long-haired bodies, men who had grown feminine, women who had become small children, flurries of long naked limbs, little girls naked under boyfriends' fringe jackets, eyes turned down, away, never meeting those of their questioners, boys with hair over their shoulders, hair that kept getting in their eyes . . . the sort of mild herd creatures who belonged, who'd feel, let's face it, much more comfortable, behind fences. Children longing for discipline.

Only this time *we* win. You have to understand entropy not just as the heat-death of a culture but as *equilibrium*. As Pynchon clued us in his first famous short story ("Entropy"), with nods to Henry Adams, so he clues us here by quoting another American crazy, Emer-

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son, from William James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience*: "Secret retributions are always restoring the level, when disturbed, of the divine justice. It is impossible to tilt the beam. All the tyrants and proprietors and monopolists of the world in vain set their shoulders to heave the bar. Settles forever more the ponderous equator to its line, and man and mote, and star and sun, must range to it, or be pulverized by the recoil."

For Pynchon, this is remarkably cheerful. But how are we, a bunch of dopers in the California redwoods, to prevail against the Geeks: Virgins vs. Dynamos? See below.

Will we care any more about these characters than we did about, say, Benny Profane and Tyrone Slothrop?

Probably not, except for DL. Like a Buddhist or a Hume, Pynchon doesn't really believe in a "self." He's more interested in states of being and becoming. Zoyd attitudinizes, Frenesi is a computer dream of patterns, Takeshi is inscrutable, Hector is a clown and Sasha is one of Tolstoy's super-goody, clean old peasants. Even Vond, "like any of the sleek raptors that decorate fascist architecture," adds up to little more than an upwardly mobile social-control freak with a flashy line of psychic yardgoods. But as Vond talks to other men through the holes in women's bodies, so Pynchon talks to his readers through the holes in his cartoon zanies. And what he wants to talk about is "official" reality (a media fabrication) versus "unofficial" alternatives (see below).

Frenesi is Pynchon's excuse to make fun of film. According to her Kollective: "A camera is a gun. An image taken is a death performed. Images put together are the substructure of an afterlife and a Judgment. We will be architects of a just Hell for the fascist pig. Death to everything that oinks!" Vond tells her, "Can't you see, the two separate worlds—one always includes a camera somewhere, and the other always includes a gun, one is make-believe, one is real? What if this is some branch point in your life, where you'll have to choose between worlds?" Frenesi brought a gun *and* a camera to the People's Republic of Rock and Roll on the night of its destruction, not to mention fast-film 7242 and a Norwood Binary light meter, for the helicopters and the troops in blackface and "the high-ticket production of their dreams." This is "Reality Time" versus "all that art-of-the-cinema handjob." She'll emerge from hiding and go to Vineland only because Hector promises to star her in *his* movie.

Hector is an excuse to talk about television. Although almost everything happens in *Vineland* in "sullen Tubeflicker," not always "prime time"; and odd birds sit in palm fronds to sing back at the commercials; and Zoyd, dropping acid, hopes Prairie will be there "to help him through those times when the Klingons are closing"; and Takeshi believes that television "mediates death"; and even Frenesi feels "that the rays coming out of the TV screen would act as a broom to sweep the room clear of all spirits"; and all over Vineland rival cable-television riggers exchange gunfire, "eager to claim souls for their distant principals, fighting it out house by house," only Hector is addicted, a Brady Buncher. When his wife kills their TV set with a frozen pot roast, Hector arrests her. He'll escape from a "Tubaldetox" program. Television is the white noise of the garrison state, the elevator Muzak of repression going down.

Zoyd is an excuse to talk about music, which he's given up, from rock in general to heavy metal ("nuke-happy

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cyberdeath," "Septic Tank and Fascist Toejam") to New Age ("audio treacle," "mindbarf") and even Bach ("the best tunes ever to come out of Europe"). And everybody's freaked by computers. Prairie wonders "how literal computers could be—even the spaces between characters mattered. She wondered if ghosts were only literal in the same way. Could a ghost think for herself or was she responsive totally to the needs of the still-living, needs like keystrokes entered into her world, lines of sorrow, loss, justice denied?" Frenesi, the absentee mother, is also metaphysical:

> It would all be done with keys on alphanumeric keyboards that stood for weightless, invisible chains of electronic presence or absence. . . . We are all digits in God's computer, she not so much thought as hummed to herself to a sort of standard gospel tune, And the only thing we're good for, to be dead or to be living, is the only thing He sees. What we cry, what we contend for, in our world of toil and blood, it all lies beneath the notice of the hacker we call God.

Whereas Sasha is Pynchon's excuse to talk about one of the alternatives to media reality—the lost history of radical politics in the American West, long before Pacifica or Savio or People's Park; the organizing of loggers, miners and canneries; the strikes against San Joaquin cotton, Ventura sugar beets, Venice lettuce; Tom Mooney, Culbert Olson, Hollywood craft unions and fifties blacklists. This repressed progressive history and its media denial seem at first the subtext of *Vineland*. These people did more for the revolution than sing about it or dope themselves stupid. Nor did they surf.

But this is to reckon without the alternative (and competing) unofficial realities of the Indians and the dolphins and DL Chastain, the kick-ass woman warrior.

In every Pynchon novel, there's a woman we love—Rachel Owlglass in *V*, Oedipa Maas in *Crying*, Katje or Greta in *Gravity's Rainbow*—because in the satiric muddle she seems to point north to a magnetic pole of decencies. DL is the one we care about here. Though trained in a variety of martial arts strategies, from the Vibrating Palm and the *Kasumi* Mist to "the Enraged Sparrow, the Hidden Foot, the Nosepicking of Death and the truly unspeakable *Gojira no Chimpira*," and equally at home among the Kunoichi Sisters and the YakMaf, she is nevertheless Frenesi's loyal friend *and* Prairie's resourceful protector *and* Takeshi's eventual lover. Like her comrades on a rescue mission into "the Cold War dream" of PREP, we believe in DL's "proprietary whammies"—"the same way in those days it was possible to believe in acid, or the imminence of revolution, or the disciplines, passive and active, of the East." She's also Pynchon's door to the Orient, into which, it seems to me, he disappears.

Now I can sound like an idiot.

I haven't mentioned the Thanatoids, nor their Vineland suburb of Shade Creek. You reach Shade Creek by water and darkness, often with the help of Vato and Blood, those strippers of cars and souls. It's a ghost town, except the ghosts aren't dead yet. They are an "unseen insomniac population," refugees from history, residues of memory, victims of "karmic imbalances—unanswered blows, unredeemed suffering, escapes by the guilty—anything that frustrated their daily expeditions on into the interior of Death, with Shade Creek a psychic jumping-off town—behind it, unrolling, regions unmapped, dwelt in by those transient souls in constant turnover."

Think of them as the un-Grateful semi-Dead.

Thanatoids, instead of rock and roll, sing songs like "Who's Sorry Now?"; "I Gotta Right to Sing the Blues"; "Don't Get Around Much Anymore"; "As Time Goes By." They watch television, although they learned long ago "to limit themselves, as they always did in other areas, only to emotions helpful in setting right whatever was keeping them from advancing further into the condition of death. Among these the most common by far was resentment, constrained as Thanatoids were by history and by rules of imbalance and restoration to feel little else beyond their needs for revenge."

Weed Atman, the Timothy Leary–like mathematics professor who rose implausibly to become guru of the People's Republic of Rock and Roll before Frenesi betrayed him, is a Thanatoid. So are many Vietnam veterans, like Ortho Bob. Ortho Bob explains to Takeshi that "in traditional karmic adjustment. . . . Death was the driving pulse—everything had moved as slowly as the cycles of birth and death, but this proved to be too slow for enough people to begin, eventually, to provide a market niche. There arose a system of deferment, of borrowing against karmic futures. Death, in Modern Karmic Adjustment, got removed from the process." Takeshi, like the Sis-

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terhood of Kunoichi Attentives, sees the moneymaking possibilities of a "Karmology hustle." So, apparently, do Vato and Blood, Charons on the Shade Creek Styx. When Vond comes looking for Frenesi, he'll meet Vato and Blood instead, while the leftover flower children are at a picnic with the leftover Wobblies and a Russian punk rocker who wandered into the redwoods.

According to Takeshi, if none of this other stuff works, "we can always go for the reincarnation option." Takeshi is into the *Bardo Thodol*, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, with souls in transition, denying death, unable to distinguish between "the weirdness of life and the weirdness of death." So, of course, are the Thanatoids. But. . . .

In a way, everybody in *Vineland* is a Thanatoid, a deadhead, full of bad faith; equally guilty, resentful and nostalgic; under(ghost)cover, in motion through varying thicknesses of memory and light toward a reckoning. Zoyd's sixties surfer band, the Corvairs, found "strange affinities" with the subculture of "beer riders of the valleys": both rode a "technowave. . . . Surfers rode God's ocean, beer riders rode the momentum through the years of the auto industry's will." DL, in her "Ninjamobile," has an L.A. freeway vision of screaming black motorcades, cruisers, huge double and triple trailer rigs,

> flirters, deserters, wimps and pimps, speeding like bullets, grinning like chimps, above the heads of TV watchers, lovers under the overpasses, movies at malls letting out, bright gas-station oases in pure fluorescent spill, canopied beneath the palm trees, soon wrapped, down the corridors of the surface streets, in nocturnal smog, the adobe air, the smell of distant fireworks, the spilled, the broken world.

Frenesi dreams of a "Gentle Flood," of standing

> just above the surf, looking toward a horizon she couldn't see, as if into a wind that might really be her own passage, destination unknown, and heard a voice, singing across the Flood, this wonderful song . . . telling of the divers, who would come not now but soon, and descend into the Flood and bring back up for us "whatever has been taken," the voice promised, "whatever has been lost."

But there were ghosts before the sixties—the Yurok Indians. Early Russian and Spanish visitors to Vineland felt

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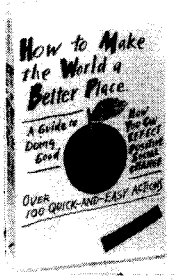

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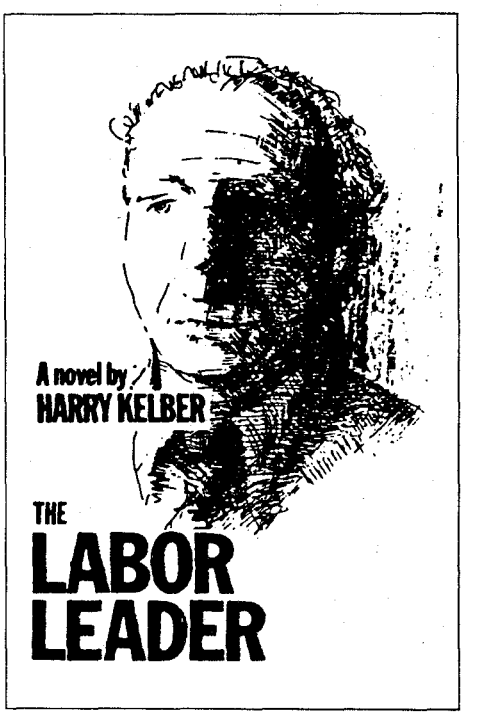

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some "invisible boundary" the Indians "might have known about but did not share . . . black tips of seamounts emerging from gray sea fringed in brute-innocent white breakings, basalt cliffs like castle ruins, the massed and breathing redwoods, alive forever . . . the call to attend to territories of the spirit." And there were ghosts even before there were Indians. Past the lights of Vineland, "the river took back its oldest form, became what for the Yuroks it had always been, a river of ghosts" with spirits called *woge*, "creatures who had been living here when the first humans came," who went away, eastward, over the mountains or "nestled all together in giant redwood boats, singing unison chants of dispossession and exile." Trails without warning "would begin to descend into the earth, toward Tsorrek, the worlds of the dead." Eco-freaky hippies tell Vato and Blood that

> this watershed was sacred and magical, and that the *woge* were really the porpoises, who had left their world to the humans, whose hands had the same five-finger bone structure as their flippers . . . and gone beneath the ocean, right off Patrick's Point in Humboldt, to wait and see how humans did with their world. And if we started fucking up too bad . . . they would come back, teach us how to live the right way, save us.

What's going on? If we put together Shade Creek, flood dreams, technowaves, William James, porpoises and *woge* with Vheissu in *V* and the Trystero underground in *Crying* (clairvoyants, paranoids, outcasts and squatters swinging in "a web of telephone wires, living in the very copper rigging and secular miracle of communication, untroubled by the dumb voltages flickering their miles") and the "Deathkingdoms" and "death-colonies" Blicero apostrophizes in *Gravity's Rainbow* ("waste regions, Kalaharis, lakes so misty they could not see the other side," original sin, modern analysis), we end up with something that looks a lot like if not a comic-book *Thodol*, then maybe that nonviolent Buddhist "global novel!" Maxine Hong Kingston has been going on about recently in the pages of *Mother Jones* and on—gasp!—The Tube. For that matter, Zoyd, Prairie, Takeshi, DL and the Wobblies look a lot like the 108 bandit-heroes of *Water Margin*, the Chinese Robin Hood that Kingston has so much fun with in *Tripmaster Monkey*.

According to *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, dying takes time. We experience the supreme void as pure light and hope it takes us straightaway to Amitabha, which is for Buddhists what "one big union" was for Wobblies. If the pure light won't take us, we must wrestle with our past, our karma. Only after apparitions both beautiful and monstrous are done with our "conscious principle" will we be reborn—the "reincarnation option"—as something else, somewhere other, on the great wheel. Pynchon calls this place, in the last word of *Vineland*, "home." Wouldn't it be sweet to think so? □

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Past Present

BRUCE McCALL

It meant wafting through the empyrean in a linen-paneled drawing room at the speed of clouds while a piano tinkled and Mosel flowed; riding under a thing as big as an iceberg, suspended above the earth as gently as if dangled on a string and seeming to waft along, yet wafting from Europe to North America twice as fast as the fastest steamship could race; and remaining throughout on such intimate terms with Mother Earth that you could lean out an open window once you reached landfall and hear a dog bark in the countryside sliding by below.

There was no experience in the annals of transportation to match the zeppelin—"rigid airship" to the British and Americans, *dirigeable* to the French (and "blimp" only to the hopelessly ignorant). It was the least machinelike of all flying machines, a poet's idea of an airplane. In a world moved by thundering locomotives and racketing aircraft and rumbling, wallowing steamships, airship travel offered a journey from one place to another conducted with the rapture of a dream.

From the perspective of today, for all the subsequent wonders of supersonic flight and space travel, the airship experience seems more the stuff of fairy tales than commercial passage. But even from the perspective of a landlocked small-town kid like myself in the 1940s, whose escapist fantasies jelled early into a fascination with everything man-made that moved, nothing—not the mighty Pan Am Clipper flying boats, not the swank double-decker Boeing Stratoliner, not even the H.G. Wellesian Northrop Flying Wing—could match the mystique of the silent, ghostly, majestic airship.

A mystique made infinitely more compelling by the fact that what its admirers so often referred to as the Leviathan of the Sky, a rare apparition even in its halcyon days, was then as safely extinct and unreachable as the dinosaur that it more than slightly resembled. Dinosaur bones at least survived. Of the airship there was next to no trace left on earth, save for a Brobdingnagian former hangar south of San Francisco and the Zeppelinheim exit off an autobahn near Frankfurt am Main in Germany, terminus of the Reedere Zeppelin's regular flights to Rio and New York in the 1920s and 1930s.

But if the zeppelin had vanished forever from the skies, it could still be viewed by peering backward in time, through the media of old magazines and books and postcards, a few compilations and histories of more recent vintage, and most vividly in the occasional fleeting few seconds of flyspecked newsreel footage in one or another TV documentary. I managed to assemble my own minor trove of airshipiana over the years: the celluloid tag from a sack of emergency provisions actually carried aboard the Graf Zeppelin on its Arctic expedition in the 1920s; a fat 1932 German album stuffed with pasted-in photos from the Graf's 1929 round-the-world voyage, replete with diagrams and cutaways; even a silver foil replica of a German coin bearing the visage of old Count Zeppelin himself in bas-relief.

Alas for the airship. So grand, so gentle, so civilized—why did it have to die?

Bruce McCall, the author of Zany Afternoons *(Knopf), is a columnist for* Esquire *and a creative director of McCaffrey and McCall Inc. "Past Present" is an occasional column edited by Gwyneth Cravens.*

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To the airship aficionado, why does anyone even need to ask? It was a case of murder plain and simple, in the early evening of May 6, 1937, over Lakehurst, New Jersey, when the arriving Hindenburg suffered the double cataclysm of catching fire and virtually dematerializing in seconds in full view of newsreel cameras and before radio microphones—thereby instantly becoming history's first live transportation disaster (see the bodies popping off the burning pyre like fleas off a dog, hear the on-air announcer overcome by grief), searing one primally horrifying image of the airship into the popular imagination for generations to come. For all time.

Little matter that so few people died in the Hindenburg disaster (thirty-six, to be exact, most of them crew members) that it would barely qualify in modern transportation terms as a "disaster" at all; or that its flaming end was quite possibly no fault of its own but sabotage, a forerunner of the terrorist's bomb. Thanks to the media, airship-equals-falling-fiery-death-in-the-night was all the public knew, and all the public ever needed to know.

Thus rejected, its career so cruelly aborted, the airship had already drifted deep into a consoling haze of nostalgia. And the more I pored over my picture-books and lore, the more of an idyll its brief reign seemed.

And then in 1979 along came *Airshipwreck* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston), Len Deighton and Arnold Schwartzman's picture-and-text survey of airship disasters from 1897 to 1937. The title tells it all. Deighton and Schwartzman simply set forth, in chronological order and careful technical detail, the story of virtually every airship catastrophe known. The list is astonishingly, heartbreakingly long: Few of the rigid airships ever built came to anything but a catastrophic end. For years before the Hindenburg's demise, civil and military airships of many nations, each guaranteed beforehand to be even safer, more foolproof, more advanced than the last, had been breaking up in midair or bursting into flames or colliding with hills and oceans and other things that weren't supposed to be there.

What *Airshipwreck* makes undeniable is that such disasters were foreordained, given the functional limitations within the dream of lighter-than-air aviation. That gliding silver wraith, for all its apparent grace and serenity, was a Rube Goldberg vision of flight: a ponderous assemblage of bags pumped full of volatile hydrogen gas, hung on a skeleton of creaking metal hoops covered by a delicate fabric skin that was its only protection from the elements. It was slow and would never be fast. At full maturity, in the form of the Hindenburg, it was a Wagnerian 242 tons of aluminum and fabric, swarming with riggers and mechanics and stewards—all in the service of barely more paying customers than can fit today into a single Trailways bus.

And as *Airshipwreck* documents, this tender jumbo-sized aeronautical Dumbo could be snapped in two by a summer squall, or turned into a torch in seconds by a single errant spark, or simply mishandled into disaster, because airships were so tricky to master—even in normal flight—that only a few commanders ever seemed to skirt disaster long enough to gain competence and control.

The Shenandoah, the Italia, the R-101, the Akron, the Macon—the major disasters that befell these and other major airships through the 1920s and 1930s were not isolated, freakish mishaps akin to the occasional loss of a Boeing 747 or DC-10. They were inevitable consequences of the inherent foolishness of the airship idea. For what Deighton and Schwartzman make undeniably clear in their nostalgia-busting little volume is that the airship/dirigible/zeppelin, even at its giddy zenith in the mid-1930s, was never a vision of how man could conquer space and time but rather what it had once and always been: the original and most primitive form of manned human flight, dragged forward past the limits of logic by a kind of romantic conspiracy into a world that didn't need it. All that ingenuity and effort and treasure, expended in behalf of . . . a balloon. A reverie of flight and a technology of the eighteenth century attempting to survive in the twentieth. Half hardware, half nostalgic yearning, the zeppelin was worse than impractical. It was illogical. And as such, it was doomed.

Author Deighton considered his book, for all its grisly subject matter, a kind of tribute to the men who built and flew the airships. "This generation of engineers dared to build their cathedrals in the sky," he wrote in the introduction. "No wonder that so few of them stayed there."

Deighton draws no moral from the strange saga of the airship, but a couple seem obvious. One is that poets have no business trying to build airplanes. Another is that romantics have no business egging them on. □

Oh Beautiful . . .

JOHN TAYLOR

SACRED PLACES: American Tourist Attractions in the Nineteenth Century. *By John F. Sears. Oxford University Press. 243 pp. $24.95.*

Scorn for tourists and tourism is felt to be obligatory among some intellectuals, and they lay it on thick. Consider, for example, Paul Fussell's characterization in *Abroad: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars*: "What distinguishes the tourist [from the traveler] is the motives, few of which are ever openly revealed: to raise social status at home and to allay social anxiety; to realize fantasies of erotic freedom; and most important, to derive secret pleasure from posing momentarily as a member of a social class superior to one's own, to play the role of a 'shopper' and spender whose life becomes significant and exciting only when one is exercising power by choosing what to buy." For Daniel J. Boorstin, the tourist is a mere "pleasure-seeker. . . . [and] passive; he expects interesting things to happen to him. He goes 'sight-seeing.' He expects everything to be done to him and for him."

It is refreshing, therefore, that John Sears, the author of *Sacred Places*, takes tourism seriously as a cultural activity worthy of study. He argues persuasively that beginning in the 1820s and 1830s,

> tourism played a powerful role in America's invention of itself as a culture. . . . Because of America's relation to Europe and to its own past, because its cultural identity was not given by tradition but had to be created, tourist attractions have played an especially important role in America. . . . Tourism provided a means of defining America as a place and taking pride in the special features of its landscape.

Describing their visits to tourist attractions like Niagara Falls or Mammoth Cave, many American writers called themselves "pilgrims" out of the convic-

John Taylor is a New York City–based writer currently at work on a book about landscape and the narrow-gauge railroads of the southern Rocky Mountains.

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tion that these and other natural wonders were sacred places. In this country without a past, where there were no ancient churches or ruins to venerate, there was no choice—landscape had to serve as a substitute. Thus certain natural features of the national expanse became sanctified in some degree, at least until the twentieth century. Since tourist attractions belonged to the nation and were universally accessible, a national park like Yosemite provided, as Sears puts it, "points of mythic and national unity."

Like almost everything else, tourism is no longer quite what it used to be. Originally promoted by the educated elite and by leading writers and painters, tourism has since become a democratic mass movement. What makes *Sacred Places* important as well as interesting is that by tracing the history of tourist attractions to their origins, Sears supplies a certain perspective. He demonstrates that tourism in America is much older than the consumer culture of which it is now a part. He also shows that where programmatic landscape viewing is the aim, tourists' feelings tend to be complex, both worshipful and irreverent at the same time. If this contradiction still holds, how is the landscape to be protected from further commercialization?

Sacred Places prompts this question, but the author has no answer, and neither has anyone else. The British geographer Jay Appleton asks, "What is it that we like about landscape and why do we like it?" and then reports that so far no one, no anthropologist or philosopher, has come forward with a satisfactory explanation. Appleton and others have theories, but there is no general agreement on why landscape is appealing. This is not merely an academic question; so long as we remain unable to say what we like about landscape and why, we have no coherent principle of resistance to the forces of uglification.

For Americans the possible disappearance of landscape is fraught with potential consequences. Leo Marx says of F. Scott Fitzgerald's Jay Gatsby, in *The Pilot and the Passenger*:

> The unique significance of the landscape in the American consciousness is not to be confused with reverence for the land as such. Rather, as Fitzgerald understood, its significance is chiefly symbolic. It is a central feature of our myth of national origins. . . . Like Columbus or the Dutch sailors or the millions who followed them, Gatsby had believed that tomorrow, any tomorrow, he could have erased the past and begun a new life. . . . If Americans have a peculiar inclination to experience the world in this way, it is because the idea of a new beginning once had, or at least seems to have had, a credible basis in topographical reality.

Despite the profane pressures of mass tourism, Sears appears hopeful that the landscape will remain recognizably sacred. He may be right, though it would help if someone could figure out what the pleasures of landscape really are. That might be the new beginning we most need. One parting comment on this book as a piece of bookmaking: It contains many illustrations but no list of illustrations; many books are cited throughout the text but there is no bibliography. For the reader this is a double inconvenience, and Oxford University Press should know better than to cut such corners. □

EXCHANGE.

(*Continued From Page 258*)

Women's art is not all of a piece, any more than is the art made by men. Sometimes it is a relevant fact that it is made by women, sometimes not. Making good art is never easy. Neither is it easy to deal with positions designed to cut the common ground out from under one's feet when one undertakes to respond to them. If there *is* common ground, then those positions are themselves limited. I do know that a critical language that undertook to be gender-specific in the way implied by Constantinides would not only not carry forward the historical mission of *The Nation*, it would do irreparable harm to the very persons Constantinides has come to believe it would help. *Arthur C. Danto*

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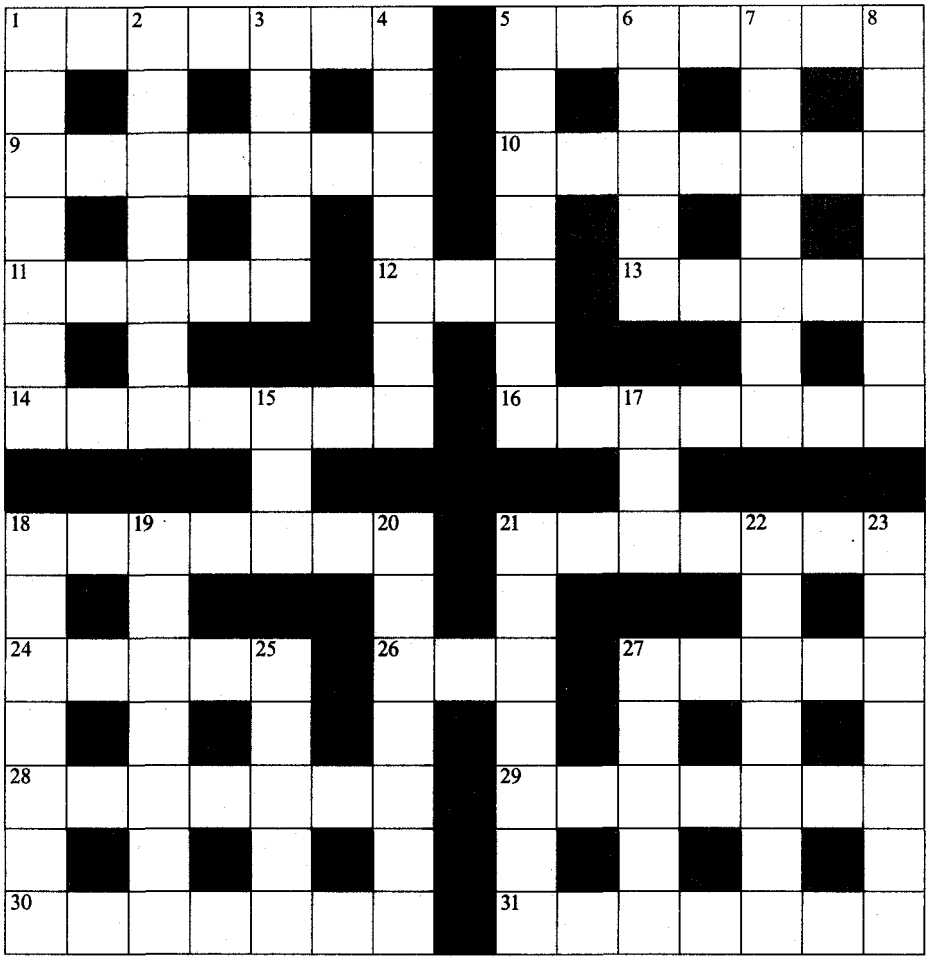

ACROSS

1 See 8 down
5 Not exactly a "roc," this—more like a rhea. (7)
9 It's dangerous, and mainly 24, 26 and 27. (7)
10 Die, as a euphemism, about one such as love, perhaps. (7)
11 You know the sort of person he is! (5)
12 Does such a man hope to live on one later with controversial force? (3)
13 It's something you might expect to get a rise out of, yet as different as it can be! (5)
14 Something to improve the vision? Don't believe it! (7)
16 A trifle angry, as they say, about the childish retort? (2,5)
18 The color around the face stayed in one place, evidently. (7)
21 Made a hippy vocal outburst, and made someone feel better. (7)
24,26 and 27 Under the main top? (5,3,5)
28 Less piled up—more like butter that way! (7)
29 In an insect, it's sort of rare—but it might be uncommon on the floor, too. (4,3)
30 The listener hurried around, and got stuck, in a way. (7)
31 They may be no better than the Pied Piper, setting the regular beginner at rest, somehow. (7)

DOWN

1 The thing here let loose in the plant? (7)
2 One might one's expenses, as expected! (7)
3,15 and 25 Loaf, too—getting what might be well-produced fare for the shut-in, perhaps. (5,3,5)
4 See 22
5 No sharp business with these in a storm, in early cinematic days! (7)
6,17 and 27 down You'll have to be superlatively close-mouthed this way, at a minimum! (2,3,3,5)
7 Behave like a monkey, as they say. (7)
8 and 1 across If you get needled all by yourself, you might want to, being fair game. (4,3,7)
15 See 3
17 See 6
18 Polishes up things once more, but refuses any help. (7)
19 One way to save the noble creature, as they once said, taking a number to heart. (7)
20 Wanted something badly? Indeed, Sir! (7)
21 Room for a judge here? (7)
22 and 4 Back talk? (Possibly on the ball but going in the wrong direction.) (7,7)
23 Such as Noah expected to carry, seed growing up around it. (7)
25 See 3
27 See 6

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